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ABSTRACT

This book is designed for women who want to react to the empty nest syndrome with a new career. The first chapter contains an introduction and activities to help with self-awareness and career exploration. The second chapter discusses the importance of a positive plan. Strategies for setting long and short term goals, a sense of responsibility for carrying out these goals in a timely manner, an optimistic outlook, adaptability and flexibility, and good interpersonal relations are all explored. In the third chapter the focus is on preparing for the job search and career advancement. Grooming for the interview, resume preparation, application form preparation, interview techniques, and cover letter and follow-up letter techniques are all addressed. The fourth chapter focuses on job retention and career advancement. This chapter contends that moving ahead in a career requires motivation, energy, and continuing preparation. Performance evaluations and problem solving abilities are discussed. The fifth chapter considers the ups and downs of moving ahead. Cultivating good interpersonal relations with other employees, improving public speaking skills, networking, and maintaining a positive attitude are all recommended. The sixth chapter presents thoughts about the practical application of the ideas in the book. Throughout the book explanations, instructions, graphics, and examples for each job preparation activity; job search techniques; and self-improvement step are included. (LLL)

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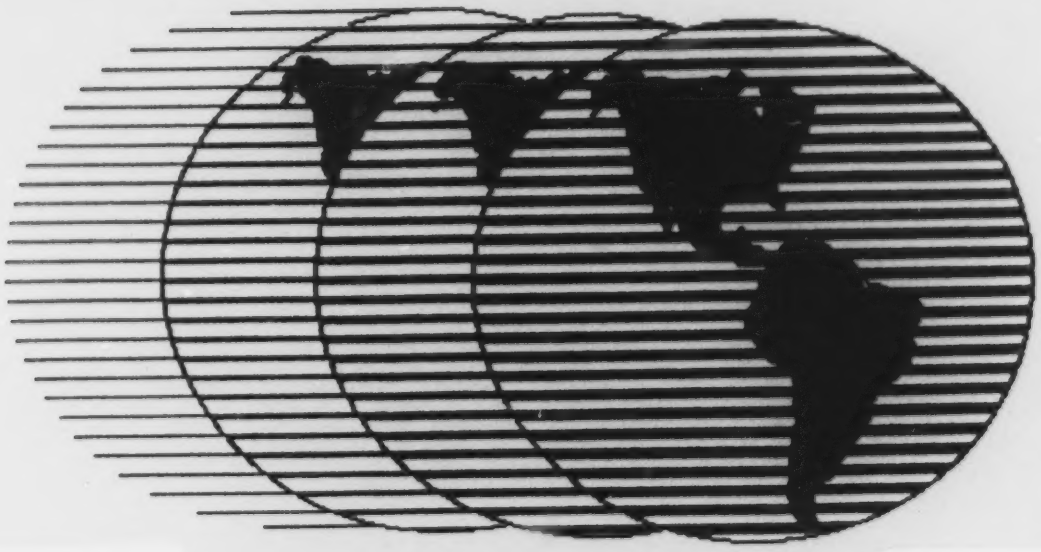
# YOUR FULL FUTURE
# . . . AFTER THE EMPTY NEST

***DEDICATED TO, AND DESIGNED FOR,***
***THE RE-ENTRY WOMAN WHO WANTS TO REACT***
***TO THE EMPTY NEST SYNDROME WITH A CAREER***



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BY

**CYNTHIA P. COAD, OTR, ED.D.**

. . . a re-entry mother of seven children, wife, and career woman

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Photographs from limitless outer space to inspire limitless ambitions.

Photographs courtesy of NASA

ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT INC.
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Muncie Indiana

# YOUR FULL FUTURE . . . .
# AFTER THE EMPTY NEST

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# DEDICATION

Special thanks to my mother, Tressa Pryor, who patiently proofread every paper; to my husband, Thomas Coad, who impatiently pushed me to try harder; and to my seven children, Gwen, Christopher, Timothy, Michael, Theresa, Hal, and Frances, who comprised the "full nest."

## ABOUT THE BOOK

*Your Full Future . . . After the Empty Nest: Job Preparation and Job Search Techniques* is dedicated to, and designed for you, the woman who wants to react to the empty nest syndrome with a career. It provides a step-by-step process to help you plan for and obtain the career you want, and effective guides to move you forward in that career. Each step makes you aware of what is necessary to reach your career goals . . . your full future.

Explanations, instructions, graphics, and examples are provided for each planning and career advancement activity. This allows for an easy-to-follow set of instructions along with ready-to-implement resources. These materials and techniques will help you feel more confident in preparing for a career, in looking for a job, and in climbing the career ladder towards your full future.

# FOREWORD

Too many people consider the empty nest a time of loss, a time when the responsibilities and challenges of motherhood wane and life begins to stand still and lose its sense of purpose. Over the years though, many women have changed the stereotypical empty nest time from one of passivity and aimlessness to one of excitement, accomplishment, and generativity.

My own empty nest experience involved a number of seemingly disastrous events. Not only had my children left home—a potential trauma for many women whose identities are only tied into their being mothers and caregivers—but my husband and I decided to invest all of our savings in a neighbor's company, in itself a stressful event. Because of this investment, my husband, Mark, became an officer of the corporation, which left him and us liable for any debts the corporation should assume.

Unfortunately, our neighbor failed to disclose that his company was in much worse financial condition than we were led to believe, and the company was soon in bankruptcy, with the IRS padlocking the gates. In a moment's time, I was faced with no savings, no source of income since Mark had since retired from his job, and no children at home to care for.

Only one option was left . . . I had to go out and find a job so that we could financially survive. For a housewife and mother whose major activities for the past 20 years were to raise two children and become a pretty decent golfer, this change was indeed a difficult one.

Searching for a job was not easy for me. I was inexperienced and out of touch with the business world. On top of this, my own upbringing stressed that money was the root of all evil, and the accumulation of capital was not something for which a woman should strive.

My job search appeared fruitful when I was all set to take a clerical position with a major utility company. However, just before I thought I was going to be hired, the personnel manager told me that although they would like so much for me to work for them, they could not hire me because I was too old. They claimed it had to do with their retirement program that would not make it worth the company's while given my age. At this point I could have hung my head, or even sued, since even in 1967 it was illegal to discriminate on the basis of age.

However, my need to secure employment and make money, not spend money I didn't have on attorney's fees. I continued my job search and went to several personnel agencies. In the end, one of them hired me to work as a job counselor. A short time later, with a $1,000 personal loan, I began a small personnel agency called Abigail Abbott. In the beginning, I ran the agency with my daughter, Diane, who, herself, balanced family and career. We did everything in the company ourselves. It was definitely a small scale operation.

In 1988, Abigail Abbott Personnel Companies celebrated its 18th anniversary. We employ 150 people and will place 10,000 people in temporary and 2,500 in full time positions before the year ends. Our sales are $20,000,000 and the future looks even brighter.

I often think back to that major utility company denying me that clerical position. Was I a victim, or was I being given an opportunity to develop and achieve new goals? Every once in a while a door will close in our faces and we will feel that there's no way out of the situation. But remember, for every door that closes, another is opening elsewhere. If we stand too long looking at the closed door, we may not see the new one opening.

Abigail Abbott became a reality only because I seized the opportunity and ran with it. The empty nest phase of our lives presents many viable opportunities if we will only open ourselves up enough to see them. We all have choices in this life, and we have the capacities to choose to learn and develop these skills necessary for success in any field of endeavor.

Whatever you choose to do during this empty nest period, make it personally exciting and fulfilling. Create a life that will encourage you to run out of bed each morning and happily greet the next exciting new day. Opportunities abound in life, regardless of the phase in which you are currently.

Outside of Abigail Abbott's corporate headquarters in Tustin, California, we had the following message etched in tile, "You're never too old, you're never too young, you're never too ethnic to succeed if you live in the United States of America."

And might I add to that, "You're never too stuck in an empty nest to fly away and live your life soaring with the eagles."

Louise E. Pomeroy
Tustin, California
June 1988

**AUTHOR'S NOTE**

Ms. Louise Pomeroy was named the Americana Woman of the Year in 1988, by Cypress College, Cypress, California, for her distinguished community service. Founder and CEO of Abigail Abbott Personnel Companies, she has consistently assisted others through her agency, and by her philanthropic and community activities. By her own example, as well as through her motivational lectures, she has been the source of inspiration for many re-entry women. Ms. Pomeroy has received awards from many other organizations, and actively participates on boards of several charitable, professional, and political organizations.

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CHAPTER **1**

# INTRODUCTION

Don't let the momentum in your life stop, you are just changing your focus.

Earthrise

Photograph courtesy of NASA

# INTRODUCTION

A momentum was in your life that has now slowed down or stopped. The scenario of excitement, of new adventures, of growth and progress, that was present has now disappeared. The underlying feeling of being needed, sometimes accompanied by worry, most of the times accompanied by pride, has vanished. Your children have become independent; they have their own lives which are no longer as deeply intertwined with yours.

My own personal definition of the empty nest is more of an explanation, and is based on first hand experiences. The house is strangely silent, the need has disappeared for you to "be up all night"; with the infant who won't "sleep through the night;" no need for you to be "up all night" with the youngster with a fever, sore throat, and earache; no need for you to be "up all night" waiting for the teenager to get home from a date. Suddenly, or so it seems when looking back, your offspring are on their own. Feel proud of yourself because you brought them this far. This is as it should be.

A time for tears? A time for joy? It's a time for both...and you will experience both. But it is also your time for a future of fulfillment after the empty nest. This, also is as it should be.

An entire range of activities is waiting to be put in motion. Forging ahead instead of becoming mired down is a multi-faceted procedure. The importance of a total plan of action must be stressed. Hopefully you began to set some long term goals way ahead of the empty nest, and hopefully you can avail yourself of some expert one-on-one counseling. The day to start planning for your "full future" is when the nest is still full. The extended hours you are "diaper-pinned within the four walls of your home are hours which can be well spent learning something new. So many subjects are presented in a self study mode which you could start; a foreign language, typing, computers.

Research has born out what mothers already knew. The first one-half of the female's life has been occupied in serving others. It was a path she chose, and one she accomplished well. In many cases this meant that her own personal career goals were not fully developed. A time comes, however, when the woman looks for her full future in the form of a career. The second one-half of her life offers her that opportunity. This is when her talents can surface and be developed. This new creativity allows the re-entry woman to begin to cultivate her own resources.

Developing a plan of action to cultivate one's own resources and talents, then putting this plan into action so that a professional career can begin and advance, is the definition of a full future to which this book is dedicated.

Never are you too late to make decisions and put a plan into action! This book offers explanations, instructions, and examples for each

advancement activity. These easy-to-follow-techniques, along with many ready-to-implement resources, will help you feel more confident. This book is designed to make your "full future" so easy to reach that you become excited about the procedure. A positive attitude based on a solid foundation will forge your full future.

A successful "full future" system consists of the following broad steps for each person:

- goal setting and decision making
- a review and evaluation of existing skills
- planning ways to overcome existing barriers
- implementation of immediate goals and "how to" activities
- planning "how to's" to continue to advance
- implementation of advancement activities

The following four activities are designed to help you start or probably more acturally stated help you continue your development toward a meaningful, rewarding full future. Before proceeding to the next chapter complete the following activities, 1 through 4, in sequence as presented.

## Activity 1
## UNDERSTANDING YOURSELF

**PURPOSE**

To further your understanding of yourself...your present, inner feelings.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Complete each sentence in direction Number 3 by explaining what you feel.
2. Recognize that these statements have no right or wrong answers because you are simply trying to understand yourself better.
3. Write your feelings for each of the following.

   a. Most people think I...

   b. I am happiest when...

   c. I wish that...

   d. If I could change something about myself, I...

e. I would like to...

f. I would like to have help with...

g. I have a hard time understanding...

h. I am worried about...

i. I am excited about...

j. Sometimes I am afraid of...

k. Most people think I...

l. I get mad about...

4. Circle the letters of Number 3 that you consider to be positive feelings. The ones not circled are either neutral or negative feelings.

5. Analyze the positive feelings and think how you could build on these.

6. Review the negative feelings and consider how you could improve these.

## Activity 2
## CHOOSING CAREERS QUESTIONNAIRE

**PURPOSE**

To help you understand why people have chosen their careers.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Contact three people who have been working at the same type of job for a year or more. The people may like or dislike their jobs.

2. Ask each person the questions in item number 3.

3. Use a separate sheet of paper for each person and record the answers. You may photocopy two additional copies of this activity to save preparation time and to provide a means of recording the information you obtain.

   a. What types of jobs did you have before this job?

   b. Considering all the different jobs you have had, which was your favorite?

      Why?

   c. Considering all the different jobs you have had, which did you like the least?

      Why?

   d. Why did you look for the type of work you presently do?

   e. What is it you like best about your job now?

      Why?

f. Do you have a lot of responsibility in your present job? Yes ___ No ___

Please explain.

g. Do you have a lot of stress in your present job? Yes ___ No ___

Please explain.

h. Do you have a feeling of accomplishment in your job? Yes ___ No ___

Please explain.

i. Does your supervisor acknowledge your achievements and/or point out your mistakes at work? Yes ___ No ___

If so, how?

j. If you could, would you choose the same career again? Yes ___ No ___

Please explain.

4. Review the information you have gathered for the following:

a. ideas on a career for yourself, and

b. why others are successful, or failures, in their career.

## Activity 3
## YOUR IDEAL CAREER

**PURPOSE**

To help you consider various aspects concerning the ideal career for you.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Answer the questions in item number 2.
2. In answering the following questions imagine that you could work anywhere, and do anything you want to do as your career.

   a. What would be your job title?

   b. Where would you be working?

   c. What would be your job duties?

   d. How much money would you be earning?

   e. What type of clothes would be appropriate for your career?

   f. What effort would your career demand?

g. What would you like most about your career?

h. What would you like least about your career?

i. What would be your accomplishments?

j. How would you be interacting with others on the job?

k. How would your work be important to others?

l. How would you combine your career and your family?

3. Evaluate your answers to these questions to help you find out what impact your ideal career would have on your life during the next few years.

## Activity 4
## DISCOVERING YOUR GOALS

**PURPOSE**

To help you see your past, present, and future goals in the proper perspective.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Fill in the spaces on the chart on the next page with regards to what you wanted in the past, what you want now, and what you will want in the future:

   a. past, present and future

   b. what you want to have

   c. what you want to do

   d. what you want to be

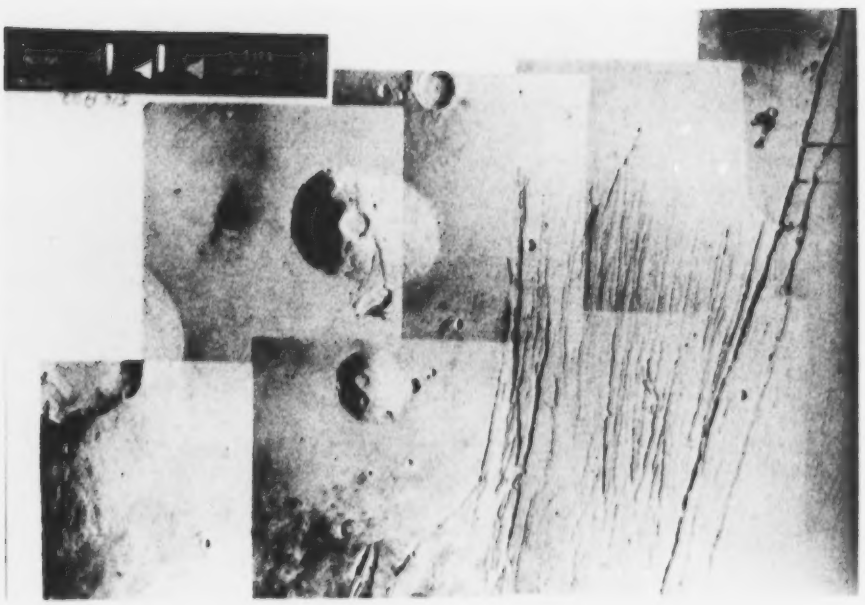
2. After completing the chart on the next page, review the chart and note how your age affects your goals.

3. Consider other things that affect your goals such as your responsibilities at each age including providing food and shelter for yourself and others, child rearing, health needs, and education.

| YEAR | AGE THAT YEAR | WHAT YOU WANT TO HAVE | WHAT YOU WANT TO DO | WHAT YOU WANT TO BE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| FIVE YEARS AGO | | | | |
| THIS YEAR | | | | |
| FIVE YEARS FROM NOW | | | | |
| TEN YEARS FROM NOW | | | | |
| TWENTY YEARS FROM NOW | | | | |

CHAPTER 2

# A POSITIVE PLAN FOR YOUR FULL FUTURE



Just as modern technology can piece together a map of a far removed planet to formulate investigative plans, you can piece together a map of your own future to formulate your personal plan.

Photograph courtesy of NASA.



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# A POSITIVE PLAN FOR YOUR FULL FUTURE

A full future requires a perception on your part of the importance of a positive plan. Ultimate success requires personal control strategies to set your long and short term goals, a sense of responsibility for carrying out these goals in a timely manner, an optimistic outlook, adaptability and flexibility, and perhaps most importantly, good interpersonal relations.

Often a woman who has put the needs of the family before her own for many years has not gained self-confidence. This is really a paradox because the proof of the mettle of a person is being generous enough to take a back seat to the needs of others. Yet, perhaps because self-confidence is a trait that needs cultivating, many times the empty nest victim has been victimized by having a low self esteem and a poor image of herself. Don't blame others. If you have a lack of self-confidence, the reason is because you let it take root. However, just as one nurtures a negative image, you can turn things around and nurture a positive image.

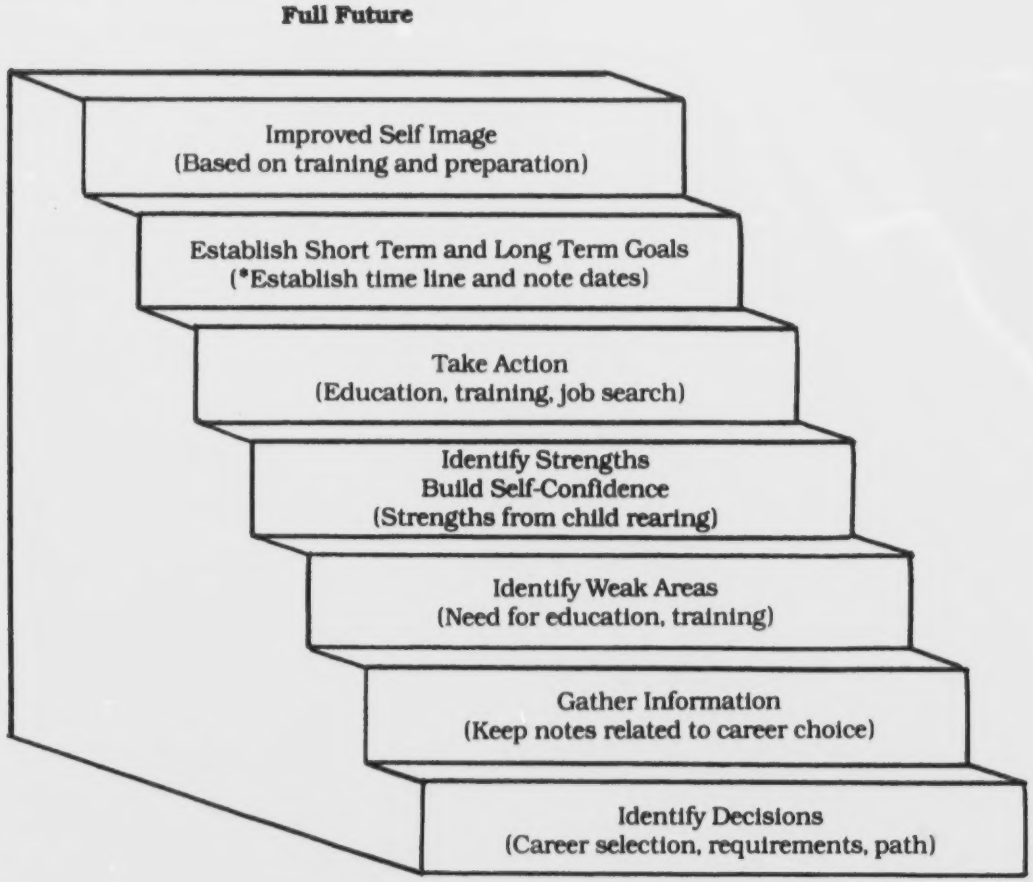
**Personal Growth Strategies**

You will gain self-confidence by using a step-by-step goal and decision-making process to piece together your future plans. When making crucial decisions, most of us feel uncertain, confused, and overwhelmed. To know that you are not alone with this mixed up feeling should be comforting to you. Remember, the goal is to feel positive about yourself and to do so can more easily be done when you have something about which to feel positive. This may mean acquiring additional education, i.e., studying clerical skills; earning a bachelor's, master's, or other advanced degree; or overcoming crippling habits such as drug or alcohol abuse, or overeating.

Much of this education can be done inexpensively at home. Many self instruction books are available for improving math, English grammar, spelling, learning a foreign language, and on and on. You will want to consider this approach if you still have children at home. Another approach is to obtain a part time job or do volunteer work where you will obtain some on-the-job training. A great person once said that the sign of a genius is the ability to do two things at a time. In this case, it's rearing children and learning new job skills for your career.

The decision-making process becomes clear when broken down into steps as in the example which follows this section. The strategy of using a step-by-step process will help organize your thoughts, and facilitate your preparation. To have a balance in all aspects of your life is important. You will need to plan growth in the areas of family and self, homelife, and career life. Do not neglect one area at the expense of another. That is why the empty nest can be a positive factor in your life...you have extra time after child rearing for your own full future.

**SAMPLE 1. PERSONAL GROWTH CHART**




*Refer to the Progress Review Charts

## Activity 5
## YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH CHART

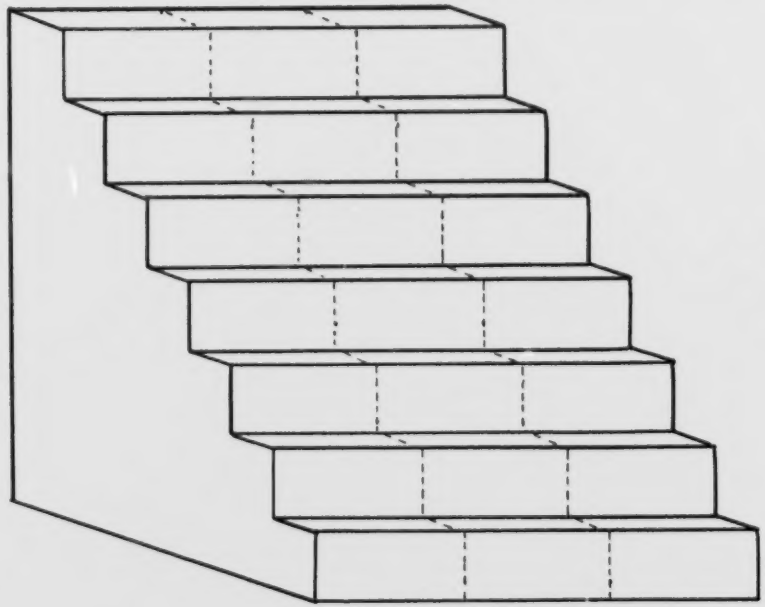
**PURPOSE**

To gain self-confidence by using a step-by-step process.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Complete each step of the staircase to provide goals which will lead to your personal full future. Refer to the sample.

2. Divide the steps of the staircase into two or three parallel treads as shown by dotted lines, if you wish, one tread per area of interest in your life.




3. Review the steps on the staircase in the growth chart to see if you neglected one area at the expense of another.

## Activity 6
## PERSONAL PLAN

**PURPOSE**

To develop a personal plan for self-improvement which will reflect personal growth.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Write specific plans after each of the following questions.
2. State what you can do.
3. State how you can do it.

**CAREER AND JOB SKILLS**

a. How can I utilize my present skills?

b. How can I improve on, and increase my skills?

**CAREER EXPECTATIONS**

c. What can I do in the next year to improve my skills for my future career?

d. What information will I need to improve my skills for my future career?

e. Where will I need to go to improve my skills?

**PERSONAL SKILLS**

f. How can I make use of my strongest personal skills?

g. What can I do to improve my weaker personal skills?

4. List what you can do today to start carrying out your own personal plan based on answers you gave.

5. Develop and put into practice your own personal plan for making needed changes and improvements.

**Responsibility for Carrying Out Decisions**

Translating your long and short term personal growth goals and decisions into action without unnecessary delays requires a strong sense of responsibility to yourself. Now that you have formulated your personal growth goals (Activity 5) and the steps to reach them, a check list and time table will facilitate implementation. A Progress Review, such as shown next, provides an easy-to-follow method.

You must prepare a separate sheet for each goal, and for different time lines. Write everything done, even the day to grocery shop, call a school to inquire about lessons, pay bills, clean the house, buy birthday cards. Make a promise to yourself to carry out these plans. Crossing out completed assignments provides a beneficial and rewarding feeling for you.

An effective suggestion is to have a supply of the progress reviews on different colored paper such as green paper for your daily list of things to do, blue paper for your weekly goals, beige paper for your monthly goals, and goldenrod paper for your long term goals. Keep them on hand in a three-ring binder. Be sure to note important dates on a calendar in this same binder. A good procedure is to have a three-year calendar for this purpose. Locate the binder where you will see it daily. This will help you stay on track and plan ahead.

Remember, if you do not refer to these lists frequently, you will have lost time preparing them. Once you have written your lists, a "spin-off" benefit will be that you will not have so many ideas free floating in your mind. Simply keep these lists on hand to glance at for your daily, weekly, monthly, or long term advancement goals as needed. Also, by assigning procedures and time lines for each goal, chances of accomplishing them will be increased. As each goal and its companion procedures are accomplished, your positive self image will be reinforced.

You may photocopy extra sheets for your personal use of the "Your Progress Review Chart."

## SAMPLE 2. PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

TOPIC Monthly Career Plan PLANNING DATE June 1

DUE DATE Sept. 1

PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL Learn clerical skills

TIME LINE: Six months

OUTCOME: Entry-level clerical skills

| ACTION | DUE | Special Concerns | Responses | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| typing | 9-1 | no prior skills | enrolled 6-8 | good progress 7-1 |
| filing | " | " | " | adequate progress 7-1 |
| | | | | certificate 8-1 |
| 10-key | " | " | " | slow 7-1<br>better 8-1 |
| | | | | certificate 9-1 |
| telephone reception | " | experience (volunteer work) | " | challenged & probed |
| | | | | certificate 7-10 |
| career workshop | " | poor interviewing | " | video taped interview 9-1 |
| | | poor self-image | | |
| | | no resume | | resume 8-15 |
| | | no interview clothes | use don gifts | wardrobe 8-25 |
| Job Search | 9-1 | nervous | practice 8-1 | contact 4-6 Empl/day |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

## Activity 7
## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

TOPIC Daily PLANNING DATE _____

DUE DATE _____

| PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL | | | | |
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| TIME LINE: | | | | |
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## Activity 8
## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

TOPIC Weekly PLANNING DATE _____

DUE DATE _____

| PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL | | | | |
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| TIME LINE: | | | | |
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## Activity 9
## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

TOPIC Monthly PLANNING DATE _____

DUE DATE _____

| PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL | | | | |
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| TIME LINE: | | | | |
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## Activity 10
## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

TOPIC Long Term PLANNING DATE _____

DUE DATE _____

| PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL | | | | |
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| TIME LINE: | | | | |
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**Extra Sheet**

## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

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DUE DATE _____

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**Extra Sheet**

## YOUR PROGRESS REVIEW CHART

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DUE DATE _____

| PERSONAL GROWTH GOAL | | | | |
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**An Optimistic Outlook**

You have now begun to make positive decisions to neutralize negative aspects of your life. You have made plans to learn new job skills, brush up your pre-existing skills, and have targeted a date for your job/career search to begin in earnest.

You are on the way toward grabbing your share of a full future. But, somehow, many women still may find that the positive traits of excitement and optimism escape them. Why is this?

Perhaps, it is due to a mistaken notion that many women have that they should wait for something or someone to make them happy. Fortunately for us, our happiness is not dependent upon others, it depends upon ourselves. We are the ones who generate our positive sentiments. Generally speaking, we do this through our own reactions to our surroundings. Sounds feasible, right?

Of course everyone will experience bad luck, or encounter wrongs which can't be changed, and no one would recommend you enjoy these experiences. But, discounting those occasions, and on a daily basis, yes, we are entirely capable of creating our own good luck.

If you want to be happy, this means you can be happy. Here is a small example. You can cloister yourself in your room and feel sorry for yourself when things have gone wrong, or you can call friends to make plans for the weekend. You can say to yourself that no one loves you, or you can volunteer at a hospital or community center where you will be greatly appreciated.

Emotional maturity will permit you to put things in perspective. To keep our emotions healthy, we need to develop some positive personality traits. According to experts, arriving at emotional maturity and maintaining it is a process which is life long:

1. ***Learn to laugh!*** As someone once said, "Humor is the free passage toward happiness."

2. ***Love yourself!*** And the best way to start is not misinterpreting this to mean being ego-centered, but by combating negative ideas we have about ourselves. Many of us put ourselves down without really examining why, and of course act as if these negative ideas about ourselves were true. Examine those negative ideas you have about yourself, discarding those which are not true, and working to change those which are.

3. ***Be outgoing and generous!*** The majority of people immediately think of generosity as giving things. I'm referring to giving of yourself. Any type of outgoing love and concern for others will enhance your life (between you and your children, spouse, brothers, sisters, and friends). If you concentrate on others, you'll feel better about yourself.

4. ***Be a part of the "world of work!"*** Being productive is one of the greatest satisfactions that a human can have. Dedicate yourself to a career and see how your self concept increases.

5. ***Live each moment!*** Living in the past and bemoaning past mistakes or misfortunes will get you nowhere. Dwelling on negative, nonproductive thoughts is guaranteed to ruin every day for you. Learn to live each day, each moment, and plan for the future. Plan at least one "I can't wait" experience each morning for that day. It doesn't have to be momentous, maybe just looking forward to your favorite TV show that evening, but it will brighten your entire day.

6. ***Examine your moral values!*** People who have sound moral values seem to focus more easily on what gives their life special value.

7. ***Exercise!*** It's been proven that even moderate exercise, done on a regular basis, will fight depression and give us a brighter outlook.

8. ***Get a check-up!*** Make sure that you are embarking on your full future in the best of health.

Prove to yourself: positive ideas help us go forward, negative ones hold us back.

**Adaptability and Flexibility**

In order to accomplish everything you have planned, you need to have maximum organization. If you plan your time, you will have more time available to accomplish a greater number of things. In addition, you will be able to have time free for family, relaxation, and hobbies.

Without organization you can't advance rapidly or with precision. Of primary importance is establishing priorities. Included in this section are instructions for making a pie graph which will include all your responsibilities. You may well have concurrent roles as a wife, mother, daughter, employee, boss, etc. Don't give your family left over time, plan time for family members on a daily basis.

From the lists you made of your goals and duties on a daily, monthly, and long term basis (Activities 7 through 10), study each category and evaluate it according to your priorities, or order of importance. Make sure that you plan your activities not only according to priorities, but also according to realistic projected dates for completion. Otherwise, you will not be able to meet your goals, and you will feel more frustrated and nervous than before.

Be flexible enough to leave free time for relaxation, emergencies, surprises, and interruptions. Some activities will take longer than planned, but on the other hand, some will take less time. Be adaptable enough to change, and flexible enough to allow for unexpected interruptions.

One effective way to help you prioritize is deciding what percentage of time you ideally want to devote to each role you have. Experts suggest that you reserve a percentage of each day to dedicate to yourself. Don't use this time to catch up on tasks, nor to run to the store. Do something you enjoy: read a book, work on a hobby, take a warm bubble bath, etc. Do what you want to do, and it should be something relaxing.

After completing Activity 11 distribute your time visually by making a pie graph and allocating pieces of that pie to represent the amount of time per activity per day (Activities 12 and 13).

## Activity 11
## REVIEW OF A SAMPLE TIME PIE GRAPH
## DIVISION OF TIME PER ACTIVITY PER DAY

**PURPOSE**

To help you understand where time goes, and help you divide your time into fair and realistic time divisions.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Study the sample divisions of time presented in the graph.

8 hours sleep
8 hours work
1 hour travel
1 hour children
2 hours husband (some may be combined children and husband)
½ hour miscellaneous
1½ hours meals
½ hour self
1½ hour housework, shop

2. Think about whether these divisions are realistic for you.

3. Identify how your life is different and how those differences do affect your pie graph (Activity 12).

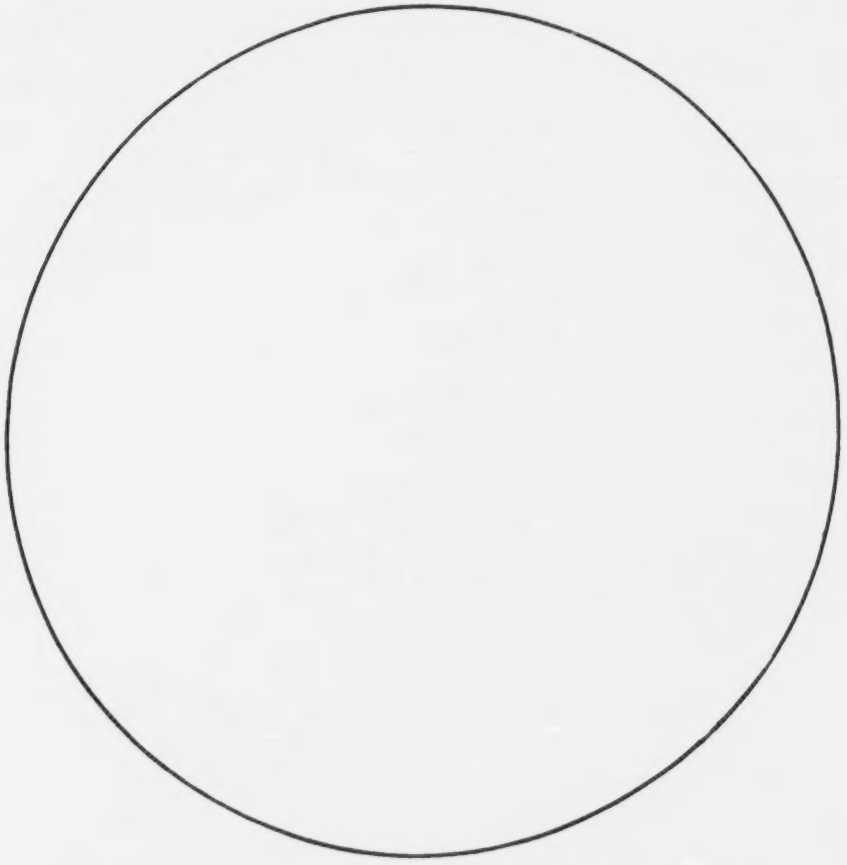
## Activity 12
## YOUR ACTUAL TIME PIE GRAPH
## ACTUAL TIME PER ACTIVITY PER DAY

**PURPOSE**

To help you understand how you are currently spending your time.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Draw pieces of this pie to correspond to the amount of time per activity per day that you *now* spend in each role you represent.



2. Compare this Pie Graph with the one showing sample divisions of time per activity per day (Activity 11).

3. Note differences.

   a. Does your Pie Graph seem to concentrate too much in one area at the expense of another?

   b. Will the time divisions on the Pie Graph with your actual time divisions assist you to reach your career goals?

4. Plan solutions. Sometimes you will be able to combine activities, such as study time and travel time by using taped study information.

   Other possible solutions:

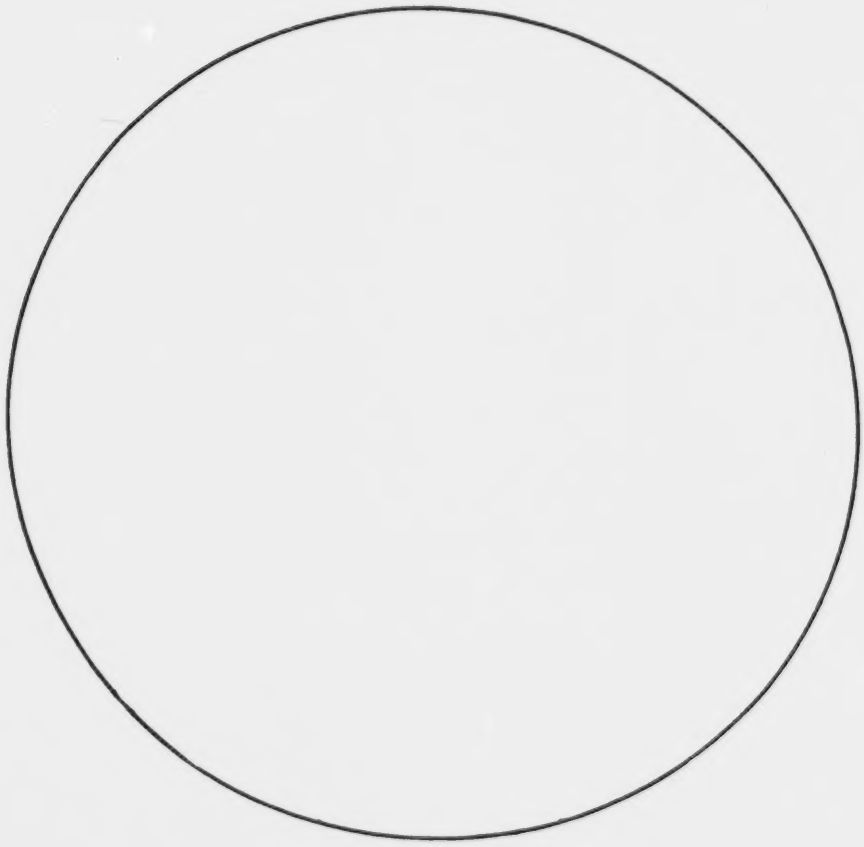
## Activity 13
## YOUR PLANNED TIME PIE GRAPH
## CORRECTED TIME PER ACTIVITY PER DAY

**PURPOSE**

To help you improve your current activities to time divisions which will be fair and realistic, and which will allow time for you to progress toward your goals.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Draw pieces of this pie to correspond to the amount of time per activity per day you plan to spend in each role you represent.



2. Compare this diagram to the Pie Graph with the sample divisions of time per activity per day (Activity 11).

3. Compare this diagram to the Pie Graph with the actual time per activity per day (Activity 12).

4. Note differences.

5. Plan solutions to turn these corrected divisions of time into reality.

**Good Interpersonal Relations**

Good business manners for the woman are as important as her work performance. Indeed, a double standard still exists in the business world which means that the woman is supposed to have good manners just because she's a woman! Unrealistic views of what constitutes good business manners are causing confusion, however. Sometimes women on the job will opt for submission instead of being assertive or offering opinions when necessary; they worry about being a braggart and therefore neglect to nourish a good self-image. Many women who wouldn't normally shake hands in a social setting when introduced, forget to do so in a business setting where it is mandatory for the successful, knowledgeable career woman.

Some norms for good manners exist which are the same for both the social and business world: being pleasant and courteous with everyone, thanking and giving credit to others, carrying one's share of the load, not blaming others for one's own mistakes, and refraining from bad language and bad mouthing others. Don't view competition as disloyalty, and don't try to avoid disagreeable assignments.

Analyze yourself. Establish your own rules of the game as they apply to you. If you are one who airs your angry feelings at work, learn to control that tendency. If you have been mixing your private life and worries with your business life, put a stop to it now, it is out of place. If you are very shy, don't let shyness prevent you from exhibiting good manners such as a firm handshake, a ready smile, and good eye contact. If you tend to lessen stress by alcohol abuse, drug abuse, or overeating, join support groups to surmount the problem.

None of us is born with perfection, it's a life long exercise. Make maintaining good interpersonal relations a priority, both in and out of work. It will become a habit easy to keep, and will help you advance in your career. Studies have shown that more people lose their jobs because of not getting along with others, than for any other reason.

## Activity 14
## YOUR BUSINESS CARDS

**PURPOSE**

To help you clarify the career you would like to have, and advancements you hope to achieve in that career.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Design a series of business cards for yourself, using 3″ x 5″ index cards.
2. Make one business card reflect a goal which you would like to achieve within two years.
3. Make another business card reflect a career advancement you would like to achieve within five years.
4. Make an additional business card reflect a career advancement you would like to achieve within the next ten years.

   a. Do your business cards contain a job title in your selected career cluster, or at least a stepping stone toward that career? (Within two, five, ten years?)

   b. Do your business cards include educational degrees you hope to earn? (Within two, five, ten years?)

   c. Do your business cards project any changes in address, for example, from an apartment to a house of your own? (Within two, five, ten years?)

d. Do your business cards indicate that you are working for someone else, or do they indicate that you will own your own business? (Within two, five, ten years?)

e. What do your business cards indicate about your abilities, aptitudes, and competencies? (Within two, five, ten years?)

5. Review these business cards to determine if they show growth forward leading from completion of today's goals (Activities 4,7,8, and 9) to completion of your longer term goals (Activities 4 and 10). They should represent what and who you want to become.

6. Reflect on ways to achieve these goals. Positive resolutions which are made, but not implemented, will not provide the positive results you wish to see.

7. Consider all sets of values, not merely career goals, which are important to you.

CHAPTER 3

# "HOW TO" ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR FULL FUTURE

Let your full blown future plans burst forth.

Photograph courtesy of NASA.

JUPITER
IO, MASSIVE VOLCANO AT HORIZON ERUPTION 100 MILES HIGH.

# "HOW TO" ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR FULL FUTURE

At this point, much of the initial planning and groundwork towards your full future should have been put into practice by you. Now is the time to progress from planning to implementation of the "how to" activities; the nitty gritty of job search and career advancement.

**Grooming for the Interview**

Since first impressions are important, especially for interviews, appropriate dress and grooming are important. Experts tell us that interviewers make their decision in the first 30 seconds of an interview, many times unconsciously, but binding just the same. Plan your wardrobe carefully so that the clothing is well coordinated, in good condition, neat in appearance, and appropriate to the job. Up to date attire, hair styles, and makeup will give an immediate impression of being up to date in everything, including the skills for the job. Attire and grooming should be considered "tools" to make an instant plus during the interview. Since personal appearance is so very important, you can actually endanger your chances for the job with a poor appearance, even before the interviewer sees the resume or a question is asked.

An overall halo effect is what psychologists refer to as the first impression an individual has of you as a total person. Unfortunately, the halo effect can work against us as well as for us. We want it to impart an aura of friendliness, up to date knowledge, and job skills competence.

The female applicant should have her hair simply styled, but in a current style, suitable for the business world. Your makeup should be subdued, but modern. A businesslike impression requires that businesslike attire be worn, and the elimination of dangling jewelry, fad items, and frilly dresses. A thorough *Interview Grooming and Attire Checklist* (Activity 15) should be consulted by you prior to each interview.

## Activity 15
## INTERVIEW GROOMING AND ATTIRE CHECKLIST

**PURPOSE**

To assist you have a winning appearance for interviews.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Check over this list prior to each interview.

- Up-to-date hair style
- Freshly shampooed hair
- Up-to-date makeup suitable for world of work
- Deodorant
- Shaved legs and underarms
- Teeth and breath clean and fresh
- Manicured fingernails, no chipped polish.
- Minimal jewelry
- Handbag to match shoes
- Briefcase to go with, or instead of purse
- Hosiery
- Tailored dress or suit
- High heels or pumps
- No gum chewing
- No smoking

2. Make changes where necessary . . . today!

**Beauty for the Re-Entry Woman**

Yes, being a re-entry woman has its challenges, but it also has its benefits. Mentally, for instance, the re-entry woman has an advantage over younger women in the world of work because of the experience she has acquired. The woman of today is learning to cultivate this phase of her life with optimism, and a positive attitude. The empty nest period is a time to appreciate additional aspects of life and to broaden horizons.

Although changes will occur, the re-entry woman can keep herself in excellent mental and physical health. She can keep herself attractive by following a regular routine of beauty care. Included in this routine is a series of mini-rules to follow to keep oneself healthy and attractive.

- Keep your figure trim and flexible by exercising.

  Avoid overdoing. Exercise for enjoyment, for health benefits and recognize that excessive exercising can produce negative effects to body and a mental set to where you will hate exercise. Exercise by taking fast paced walks, swimming, etc.

- Eat a balanced diet.

- Develop a hobby.

- Have regular physical exams.

- Follow beauty care suggestions that help nature along, such as using moisturizers, makeup foundation, lip liner with lipstick, and so forth.

- Consult a beauty specialist regarding up-to-date makeup appropriate for a career woman, then use these techniques daily, in and out of the workplace. You'll like what you see in the mirror.

- Go to a professional hair salon regularly to keep up with current hair styles. Consult the cosmotologist regarding the advisability of coloring your hair.

- Consult your dentist if your teeth don't look their best. Modern day techniques can restore your winning smile at a more reasonable cost than you think.

Arriving at age 40 plus . . . 45 plus . . . 50 plus . . . 55 plus, as you can see, is not a tragedy. It doesn't mean your productive life is at a dead end. Not even your sex life is at an end. In fact, maintaining an active sex life within the parameters of your values is not only possible, but, according to experts, healthy and beneficial.

Today is a new era, but more important is realizing that achieving a full future is a new way of viewing things. You now have the opportunity to be healthy, relaxed, career minded, and professional advancement minded...and in control. It's no wonder this post empty nest can result in the most productive and satisfactory time of your life.

**Portfolio Preparation**

Advance preparation is essential for the actual job search phase. Begin by pulling together documents which support your qualifications. Include these in a meaningful organized form in a portfolio.

Suggestions for job related documents which you will want to assemble in your portfolio are as follows:

1. Resume (Suggestions for preparation are provided later in this chapter.)

2. Examples of your abilities related to job skills. Where possible, include samples of your work. If samples are too large, include photographs.

3. Social Security number

4. Diplomas and certificates (photocopies of these)

5. Special licenses, i.e., driver's license, state certification

6. Letters and/or permission to use a minimum of two to three references such as former employers, teachers, friends established in business. Here is a hint: when seeking a letter of reference from a former employer or teacher, you, yourself, could prepare and type a sample reference letter ahead of time with pertinent information and suggest it be used for ideas. Some busy employers may even elect to use your prepared recommendation verbatim.

7. Letters of reference from past employers

After pulling together these documents, place the material in a portfolio binder with a clear plastic cover. Don't forget a briefcase, this will add to a positive halo effect for the important first impression. Your self confidence will seem to increase just by putting this package together.

**Resume Preparation**

The summary of job related facts referred to as a resume or personal data sheet helps you put your best foot forward. Whereas well designed application forms request information which may actually point out barriers to one's employment, the resume provides you with an opportunity to select a format and style which will highlight your qualifications. The resume must include the following:

1. your career objective

2. your education, particularly job related training (This need not be traditional training in a standard classroom setting, it can be self taught material.)

3. all your competencies and skills

4. past work experience, paid, volunteer, and self employment (such as child care in your home)

5. an "ice breaker" sentence about outside interests, as well as job-related interests

6. a listing of honors, special abilities such as a second language

7. a minimum of two references, their titles, addresses, and phone numbers. This may be substituted by stating references are available upon request. However, have the references typed on a supplementary sheet ready to present. Good references are instructors and former employers.

Several standard resume formats are available, but the format I'm recommending (Sample 3) is one that works best for women who have been out of the world of work because of a full-nest period of time.

**The Resume Checklist**

1. The heading of the resume is either centered, or placed on the left side of an 8½" x 11" piece of bond paper, and includes name and current address. The phone number (an additional message number is also helpful) is either centered below the name and address or on the right hand side.

2. Personal pronouns such as "I" and "my" may be used only in the "Career Objectives" and "Personal" sections.

3. Include many action words.

4. High school and/or higher education degrees, skills training, and certificates should be listed under "Education." Put the most impressive first. You have the liberty to do this on a resume.

5. List all competencies, whether learned in the past or more recently; whether learned in a classroom or by yourself via home study, in the "Competencies" or "Skills" section. Again, you have the liberty to place the most impressive first.

6. "Work Experience" includes paid work, volunteer work, and self-employment (such as child care, and practices such as sewing and cooking for profit, in your home). List each as an individual entry, or combine assorted jobs into a single descriptive paragraph (especially useful if you have job-hopped). You do not have to include the actual dates on a resume if they will work against you, such as indicating an age older than the image you wish to project.

7. You may include the names, titles, and phone number of references on the resume, or simply state that your references are available upon request.

8. Your resume must be typed. If a word processor is available, you have the opportunity to tailor the resume for each position.

9. Provide a good copy of the resume with every application.

10. Use the resume as an aid in filling out applications and during interviews.

11. Include the resume as the first page of a portfolio.

A sample resume is provided as Sample 3 and a resume format for gathering together basic information and then developing your resume is in Activity 16.

## SAMPLE 3. RESUME

FRANCES B. WRIGHT
1562 Wakefield Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92802

Telephones
714/765-9834 Home
714/546-8765 Message

**CAREER OBJECTIVE**

To obtain a position in the clerical field where I can utilize my skills and acquire additional experience that will lead to promotional advancement and long-term employment.

**EDUCATION**

Business Center, Cypress, California. Intensive clerical training which may be considered equivalent to work experience. Certificate of Completion.

Magnolia High School, Anaheim, California. Diploma.

**COMPETENCIES**

Typing 45 wpm, Filing (alphabetic and numeric), Office Procedures, Telephone Receptionist, 10-Key Calculator by touch, Microcomputer Applications (word processing), and Reprographics.

**WORK EXPERIENCE**

More than five years' experience in a self-owned child care business. Responsible for researching, planning, and implementing sound nutritional, recreational, and educational programs for preschool children.

**PERSONAL**

Career-minded and willing to further my education for advancement. In my leisure time I enjoy music and sports.

***REFERENCES***

Available upon request.

## Activity 16
## YOUR RESUME

**PURPOSE**

To assist you in developing your own winning resume.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Fill in appropriate information in spaces provided. Use an additional sheet of paper, if necessary.

YOUR NAME
Street Number & Name
City, State, Zip Code
Area Code/Home Number
Area Code/Message Number

**CAREER OBJECTIVE**

**EDUCATION**

**COMPETENCIES**

**EXPERIENCE**

**PERSONAL**

**REFERENCES**

2. Type completed resume on 8½″ x 11″ bond paper.
3. Make photocopies so that a copy may be left with any potential employer.
4. Place original typed resume in your portfolio.

**Application Form Preparation**

Application forms which are properly designed by a company have pitfalls for you as an applicant because well designed application forms can bring out your weak points. Therefore, a review of your ability to fill out correctly an application form so as to highlight your assets is essential. Employers use the employment application to obtain a wide range of information. In addition, many companies consider it a sort of first job assignment and use it to determine your quality of work. Facts the employer can determine from the application form include how well you follow instructions, your accomplishments, an indication of job stability, your education, ability to be thorough and neat, and your spelling and grammar skills.

**Application Form Checklist**

1. Follow instructions, i.e., print, use pen. (Review your spelling and printing. If they detract and if you have opportunity to do so, type the final form and have someone proofread it.)

2. Provide current address, social security number, two phone numbers (a message number such as a friend or relative who is always home is useful, as is a telephone recording device).

3. List the correct position for which you are applying as stated in the job listing.

4. Include all education. Don't omit any job-related vocational training. This can be training as a result of studies in a traditional classroom setting, or self-taught at home.

5. Present your past work experience by stating the name, city, and state of the employer followed by the job title and a sentence or two describing your job responsibilities. If you have done child care, sewing, cooking or any other business for profit at home while you were home bound with your full nest, be sure to include that. Describe everything in a positive way, including a positive reason for leaving any former position.

6. Itemize all skills and abilities, especially job-related ones.

7. Include any "extras" you have such as foreign language ability.

8. In response to the question asking whether you have a handicap or have ever had a serious illness or injury, legally the question should continue with the words "which would interfere with your ability to do the job." If you do have a handicap or have had a serious illness or injury, but something that won't interfere with your ability to do the job, even if the question doesn't end with those words just quoted you should answer that you don't. It's as simple as that. Even an individual who had open heart surgery, but who has recovered so that nothing will interfer with the ability to do the job, should respond in that manner.

9. Application forms should not ask for the year graduated from high school since one's age is easy to determine. If it does, use your best judgement regarding putting down the year. One doesn't know for what age group the company is looking and you want an interview which will give you the opportunity to put your best foot forward.

A helpful technique is to carry a completed and correctly filled out application form for reference when making employment applications. Sample 4 is a completed application form to illustrate how the form should look. Activity 17 contains a form for you to complete and take with you for reference when you apply for a job.

## SAMPLE 4. COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM

### APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

This organization does not discriminate in employment practices on the basis of race, color, age, religious creed, national origin, sex or ancestry; or on the basis of a handicap which does not limit the ability to perform the job satisfactorily. No questions on this form are intended to obtain information to be used for such discrimination.

Read Carefully—Print—Use Pen or Type—Answer Completely

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME JONES (Last) MARY (First) PRYOR (Middle) DATE 6-15

ADDRESS 9401 (Number) HILLVIEW ST (Street) ANAHEIM (City) CA (State) 92804 (ZIP)

TELEPHONE NO. 714/761-4977 (MESSAGE) 714/535-8500 (HOME) SOCIAL SECURITY NO. 877-35-4978

POSITION DESIRED RECEPTIONIST SALARY DESIRED OPEN

Do you have any physical condition which may limit your ability to perform the job applied for?
___ yes ✓ no

If yes, describe limitation —

How many days work did you miss last year due to illness or injury? 0

Reasons —

Names of persons in our company with whom you are acquainted.

—

Who referred you for employment? CHABOT COLLEGE

List method of transportation to get to work CAR

Person to notify in case of accident or emergency

Name MRS. JONES Phone 714/999-0699

Address 9446 (No.) BALL ROAD (Street) ANAHEIM (City) CA (State) 92804 (ZIP)

## EDUCATION

| | | | Years | Course | Graduate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| MAGNOLIA | ANAHEIM | CA | 4 | GENERAL | YES DIPLOMA |
| High School | City | State | | | |
| CHAPMAN COLLEGE | CYPRESS | CA | 2 | LIBERAL ARTS, CLERICAL | YES A.A. |
| College | City | State | | | |
| College | City | State | | | |
| Vocational School | City | State | | | |
| Other | City | State | | | |

## WORK EXPERIENCE

List previous jobs starting with your present or most recent one.

Employer CHAPMAN COLLEGE BUSINESS CENTER Start Date 1-5 Salary NO PAY
Left CURRENT Salary TRAINEE

Address 9222 (No.) VALLEY VIEW (Street) CYPRESS (City) CA (State) 90630 (ZIP)

Telephone No. 714/826-2222 Supervisor MS. PAULSON

Duties CLERICAL TRAINEE

Reason for leaving COMPLETED TRAINING

Employer MARY'S MARVELS Start Date 2-84 Salary COST/ITEM
Left CURRENT Salary ____

Address 9401 (No.) HILL ST (Street) ANAHEIM (City) CA (State) 92804 (ZIP)

Telephone No. 714/535-8500 Supervisor SELF-OWNED

Duties CATERING AND CAKE DECORATING, TELEPHONES, SCHEDULING, BILLING

Reason for leaving CAREER CHANGE (WORK WHILE IN SCHOOL)

Employer FOREST INSURANCE Start Date 4-82 Salary MINIMUM
Left 2-84 Salary $5/HR

Address 1561 (No.) MAIN ST (Street) SANTA ANA (City) CA (State) 92801 (ZIP)

Telephone No. 714/761-4111 Supervisor MR. THOMPKINS

Duties RECEPTIONIST, TELEPHONES, SCHEDULING

Reason for leaving STARTED OWN BUSINESS

## COMPETENCIES

| | Yes | No | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Typing | ✓ | | Other, list TELEPHONE RECEPTION, |
| Filing | ✓ | | REPROGRAPHICS, BUSINESS |
| Calculator | ✓ | | ENGLISH, BUSINESS MATH |
| Word Processor | ✓ | | Certificates, licenses TYPING, FILING, |
| Bookkeeping | ✓ | | CALCULATOR |

## REFERENCES

List individuals who know of your abilities.

Name MS. LOWELL, INSTRUCTOR Phone 714/826-2779

Name DR. POWERS, COORDINATOR Phone 714/555-4978

Name _____ Phone _____

## AGREEMENT

1. I declare all the information I have given in this application is true and complete. I agree that any untruth, omission, concealment of facts or failure to answer any questions accurately will be grounds for termination from employment, if hired.

2. I give my authorization to check with my references and former employers concerning my character and past work history.

3. If employed, upon termination of my employment I will return any and all company property and records in my possession.

4. If employed, I agree to abide by all the company's rules and regulations.

This organization will give every consideration to this application. The submission of this application, however, does not assure that any positions are open nor does it obligate the organization in any way.

Signature of Applicant Mary Bryon Jones Date 6-15

Additional comments or information BILINGUAL, SPANISH/ENGLISH

## DO NOT WRITE BELOW LINE

Remarks _____

## Activity 17
## YOUR APPLICATION FORM

**Purpose**

To provide you with experience in completing an application form.

**Directions**

1. Complete the Application for Employment Form.
2. You may photocopy an extra copy when the form is in the shape you want it, place it with your packet of items to take with you when you go for job interviews.

### APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

This organization does not discriminate in employment practices on the basis of race, color, age, religious creed, national origin, sex or ancestry; or on the basis of a handicap which does not limit the ability to perform the job satisfactorily. No questions on this form are intended to obtain information to be used for such discrimination.

Read Carefully—Print—Use Pen or Type—Answer Completely

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME _____ DATE _____
Last First Middle

ADDRESS _____
Number Street City State ZIP

TELEPHONE NO. _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NO. _____

POSITION DESIRED _____ SALARY DESIRED _____

Do you have any physical condition which may limit your ability to perform the job applied for?
_____ yes _____ no

If yes, describe limitation _____

_____

How many days work did you miss last year due to illness or injury? _____

Reasons _____

_____

Names of persons in our company with whom you are acquainted.

_____

_____

Who referred you for employment? _____

List method of transportation to get to work _____

Person to notify in case of accident or emergency

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____
No. Street City State ZIP

## EDUCATION

| | | | # Years | Course | Graduate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| High School | City | State | | | |
| College | City | State | | | |
| College | City | State | | | |
| Vocational School | City | State | | | |
| Other | City | State | | | |

## WORK EXPERIENCE

List previous jobs starting with your present or most recent one.

Employer _____ Start Date ____ Salary ____
Left ____ Salary ____

Address _____
No. Street City State ZIP

Telephone No. _____ Supervisor _____

Duties _____

Reason for leaving _____

Employer _____ Start Date ____ Salary ____
Left ____ Salary ____

Address _____
No. Street City State ZIP

Telephone No. _____ Supervisor _____

Duties _____

Reason for leaving _____

Employer _____ Start Date ____ Salary ____
Left ____ Salary ____

Address _____
No. Street City State ZIP

Telephone No. _____ Supervisor _____

Duties _____

Reason for leaving _____

## COMPETENCIES

| | Yes | No | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Typing | ____ | ____ | Other, list ____ |
| Filing | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| Calculator | ____ | ____ | ____ |
| Word Processor | ____ | ____ | Certificates, licenses ____ |
| Bookkeeping | ____ | ____ | ____ |

## REFERENCES

List individuals who know of your abilities.

Name ____ Phone ____

Name ____ Phone ____

Name ____ Phone ____

## AGREEMENT

1. I declare all the information I have given in this application is true and complete. I agree that any untruth, omission, concealment of facts or failure to answer any questions accurately will be grounds for termination from employment, if hired.
2. I give my authorization to check with my references and former employers concerning my character and past work history.
3. If employed, upon termination of my employment I will return any and all company property and records in my possession.
4. If employed, I agree to abide by all the company's rules and regulations.

This organization will give every consideration to this application. The submission of this application, however, does not assure that any positions are open nor does it obligate the organization in any way.

Signature of Applicant ____ Date ____

Additional comments or information ____

____

## DO NOT WRITE BELOW LINE

Remarks ____

**Interview Techniques**

In the course of this total step-by-step "how to" job search plan you will require a review of existing job search skills, receive coaching in weak areas, and update any skills which have turned a little rusty.

The interview is a preview period where the employer can see you as a possible employee. You must give the impression that you have the skills for the job, are dependable, and can get along well with people. In fact, knowing what to do and what not to do will ensure your self-confidence. Most interviews are composed of an introduction, question period, and closing remarks.

During the introduction phase, you need to be poised, listen well, and try to make a friend of the interviewer. Your responses will demonstrate intelligence if they are well prepared and practiced beforehand, spoken clearly and without slang.

Willingness and eagerness to learn are strong qualities which are demonstrated by showing interest in the job. During the question phase of the interview, the interviewer will ask many job related questions. In response to the interviewer asking you if you have any questions, ask job related questions such as the availability of training, and promotional opportunities from within.

Simulate an interview situation and practice the interview. A video taped interview is an invaluable aid. The job interview is your chance to sell yourself, to show that you have the skills necessary for the job, and that you're dependable. You'll accomplish this if you have rehearsed it several times beforehand.

A good technique is to list all your strengths and weaknesses and then verbalize these in the most saleable manner. Remember, your weaknesses should be put in a "positive" light. You may view being a perfectionist as a problem you have, but it's one that an employer loves.

Research prior to the interview will make you familiar with each company, and the type of work involved. Keep in mind that employers want short, but complete answers that show some thought. Develop some "standard" answers to questions frequently asked.

Good manners are always appropriate in any situation. Indeed, as an integral part of the opening and closing remark phases of the interview, good manners are indispensable. Remember, upon completing the interview, try to make a complimentary observation about the company. Ask for a business card before you leave. This will show your interest, and also provide you with the information you will need for your follow up thank you letter and future telephone calls. In today's world, female applicants should begin and end the interview with a firm handshake, good eye contact, and a nice smile. Thank the interviewer for the courtesy of the interview.

By the way, body language is, many times, more explicit than what is said. Therefore, good eye contact and good posture speak loudly. Body

language can reflect a person's views more accurately than the vocabulary used, many times without a person even knowing it. Be alert that body language can portray boredom, impatience, and fatigue as well as friendliness and interest. Frequently, shy people, especially shy women, have trouble making and maintaining eye contact. Hands are best kept in your lap, they can indicate nervousness or doubt. Sitting up straight, perhaps slightly forward, presents a positive, interested image.

Some sample questions which are frequently asked, and suggested answers are included in the next section of this chapter.

**Frequent Job Interview Questions and Sample Answers**

1. "In what position are you interested?"

   Mention the job you are applying for by title. Explain how your skills are appropriate for this position.

2. "Tell me about your skills."

   Remember to include everything! This may mean glancing at your resume so that you won't forget anything. The interviewer should have a copy of your resume at this point, but you should also keep your copy in front of you. (Many companies do an initial screening over the phone prior to your coming into the office to fill out an application, so be sure to have your resume in front of you during those phone calls because many of those questions will be the same as those on this list.)

3. "Tell me about your past work experience."

   Now is the opportunity to tie in all your previous paid and volunteer work experience to the requirements of this job. Include self-employment too. Jobs you did at home while you were "home bound with your full nest" such as child care, craftwork, and baking for others should count as work experience because you had to meet the exacting demands of a customer, especially if you had an ex officio business and sold your products.

4. "What was your last job and why did you leave it?"

   No matter why you left your last job, make this response a positive one, but without falsehoods, of course. You might say "I left my last job for a greater challenge," or, after being out of the career world because of raising your family, you might say "I truly feel that I am ready to find a job in line with my career goals. Previous jobs I've had were in preparation for this step." If you have just completed a job skills training course, end your statement by referring to that fact by saying "I have just completed an intensive job skills course which provided me with the latest state of the art skills that this job requires."

5. "Why do you want to work for this company?"

   Look up information about the company and their products before going for your interview. Call the company ahead of time and ask them to mail you a printed brochure about the company if one is available.

6. "What salary do you expect?"

   It's a good idea to respond to this question with a question by asking the interviewer what the company policy is concerning pay for your experience and skills. Also, you might mention a range you'd consider, or say that you're open.

7. "Do you have references?"

   Mention previous employers, teachers, and other people who can recommend your skills and good work habits. Be sure to ask their permission prior to using them as a reference. Doing so is good manners, and besides, a call will serve to remind the reference who you are and thus assure a good recommendation.

8. "What do you consider your strength?"

   Be sure to mention a competency that you do well. Make the answer job related.

9. "What do you consider your weakness or problem area?"

   This is a trick question. Make the weakness into a positive for the company. You might consider being a perfectionist a weakness, but it is one the employer will love!

10. "With what kind of people do you dislike working?"

    Another trick question. The goal is to be able to get along with everyone. That applies to the world of work as well as to one's everyday life.

11. "Do you have a car?"

    Legally, the interviewer should only ask about whether or not you have "transportation" and can arrive to work on time. However, many interviewers still assume a person will be more punctual coming by car. No matter if you have a car, take the bus, ride a bicycle or walk to work, the correct answer is "I have transportation and make it a practice to arrive early to work."

12. "Do you have anything to add?"

    This is the opportunity for you to mention anything that was not covered in the interview. Things such as additional skills or a foreign language proficiency should be covered in a complete manner in every interview.

## Activity 18
## YOUR ANSWERS TO COMMON INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**PURPOSE**

To help you compose effective answers to the most frequently asked interview questions.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Write an answer for each question which best fits you.

   a. In what position are you interested?

   b. Tell me about your skills.

   c. Tell me about your past work experience.

   d. What was your last job and why did you leave it?

   e. Why do you want to work for this company?

   f. What salary do you expect?

g. Do you have any references?

h. What do you consider your strength?

i. What do you consider your weakness or problem area?

j. With what kind of people do you dislike working?

k. Do you have a car?

l. Do you have anything to add?

2. Analyze your answers to see if they put you in a positive light.

3. Practice these answers several times.

## Activity 19
## PRACTICING INTERVIEWS

**PURPOSE**

To practice interviewing skills which will enable you to polish these skills into winning techniques for the actual employment interviews.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Arrange for a friend (or use a tape recorder) to ask you the frequently asked interview questions found in Activity 18.

2. Use a copy of the Interview Appraisal Chart (Activity 20) found on the following page for each practice session. Select a quiet place to conduct the simulated interviews.

   a. Someone asks you at least ten of the frequently asked interview questions from the list.

   b. Review the "feedback" from your interview for about five minutes.

   c. After about 15 minutes of practice interviews, you and your friend may want to switch roles.

4. Listen to the "feedback" provided by your friend, and/or listen to the recorded answers you gave.

5. Evaluate your practice interviews.

6. Plan ways to improve your interviewing techniques.

7. Use a new Interview Appraisal Chart (Activity 20) for each practice interview. You may want to photocopy a few copies for your personal use.

8. Compare each Interview Appraisal Chart with the previous one to note improvement, or areas in which you need to improve.

## Activity 20
## INTERVIEW APPRAISAL

**PURPOSE**

To assist you appraise your practice interviews.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Ask your friend to check the appropriate box for each area.
2. Judge for yourself areas to improve. Many times you are your best teacher.

Interviewee _____ Date _____

Interviewer _____

| | Poor | Weak | Fair | Adequate | Good | Excellent | COMMENTS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Clarity of Employment Objective | | | | | | | |
| Body Language | | | | | | | |
| Eye Contact | | | | | | | |
| Ability to describe work experience | | | | | | | |
| Ability to describe education | | | | | | | |
| Business Manners | | | | | | | |
| Response to Questions | | | | | | | |

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

3. In the Additional Comments section, explain the reason for each check under poor, weak, or fair.
4. Develop ways to overcome the problem and raise your scores to good and excellent.
5. Repeat these practice interviews several times.

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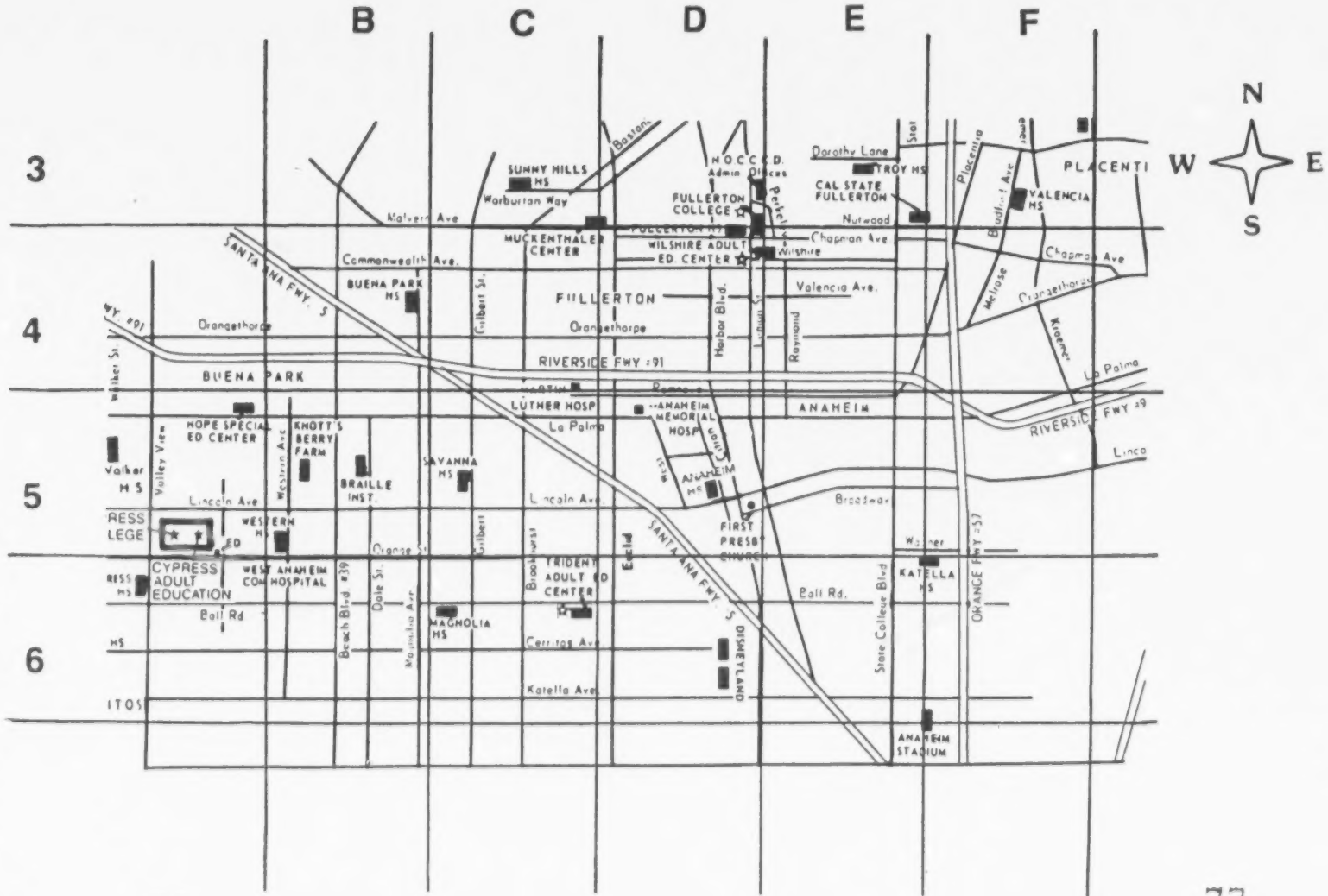
**Map and Bus Schedule Reading**

Just as integral to successful job search techniques is arriving at the correct site to fill out an application form or for an interview. To do this you need the ability to read a map and/or bus schedule. I find that many women who have been "home bound with a full nest" need practice to read a map sufficiently well to find locations of businesses.

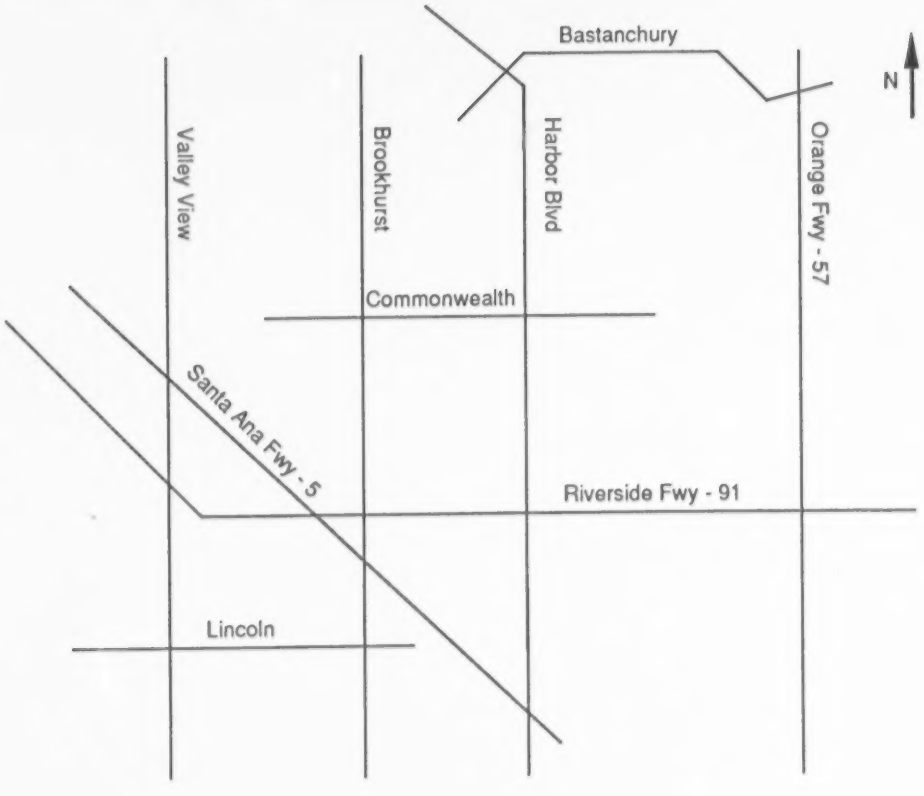
Reading a map is no great mystery. When reading a detailed city map, begin by checking to see which part of the map is north (bus maps are notorious for having north at a direction different than the traditional top of the page). Look up the name of the street in the map index and find the grid which will be either letters, numbers, or a combination. Using the grid code for that particular map, match it with the grid square formed by following the grids printed at the top and side of the map which correspond to the grid given for that street. Simplify the learning process by first locating your own address on the map by following these instructions. Then you can verify if you are following the correct procedure. Also, identify how the small numbers printed alongside of some of the streets on the map indicate the address number. If your own street doesn't have a small number printed on it to indicate the address, find a street in the same city running in the same direction as your street to help orient yourself.

Danger! If you try to drive while looking at a large detailed city map, I'll guarantee that you will have an accident! To facilitate finding a location, draw your own map to the site of the interview using the detailed city map as your guide. Examples follow to show how to read a detailed map, and then how to draw an easy-to-follow map to find your interview site.

## SAMPLE 5. PRINTED MAP



**SAMPLE 6. HAND DRAWN MAP**




Go north from the intersection of Lincoln and Valley View (your home) to Riverside Freeway (91). Go east (right) to Harbor (after Brookhurst and before Orange Freeway (57). Go north (left) on Harbor to 1000 N. Harbor (after Commonwealth and before Bastenchury. 10 a.m. appt.

**Want Ad Review, Job Listings**

A job listing or job lead can be defined as information about an opportunity for employment. Examine every type of job listing, record the name of the contact person, telephone number, address, job qualifications required, job description, and method to apply.

Many resources are available to assist you in discovering job opportunities. The yellow pages of the telephone directory offer a source which is already divided according to job skill areas. For instance, clerical jobs abound in the section entitled "Insurance Companies."

Reading the want ads daily is an important source of job openings. Ads generally include the job title, i.e., clerk typist; a brief list of duties; qualifications required for the position such as job skills, education, and previous experience; and the manner to apply, i.e., making a call, mailing a resume or applying in person. Some ads mention hours, full or part time, pay, and/or benefits. When addresses are included in the ad, it gives you an idea of proximity. When calling for an appointment, ask for cross streets, this will make your map reading easier.

Follow up all advertised jobs relating to your qualifications. This may entail a phone call to set up an appointment, mailing a resume with a cover letter, or visiting the site directly.

Since many jobs are never advertised, networking with friends, business people, and relatives has been successful for many job hunters.

**Registration with Appropriate Agencies**

Become knowledgeable about other sources of job leads. Explore and act on these possibilities regularly throughout your job search. Traditional sources of assistance with employment opportunities include directly contacting businesses and industries, the Chamber of Commerce, non-fee personnel agencies (investigate the fee personnel agencies carefully so as to understand all their terms), and the State Employment Development Department.

Some agencies require proficiency tests of their clients to determine the level of job skills they possess. Knowing this ahead of time, coupled with your own recent skills instruction or brush up, should make these tests something to look forward to since the results will be to your benefit. Practicing beforehand with sample tests such as the sample civil service tests available in book stores and libraries, will give you an extra edge.

**Proficiency Test Taking**

Generally speaking, companies today are aware of the Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) Commission guidelines, and applicants can expect that any tests administered during the hiring process will be directly related to the position. However, be knowledgeable about professionally accepted technical standards for testing during the hiring process. Proficiency tests which are part of the hiring process must be job related, free of cultural bias, and in compliance with other EEO requirements.

Many times more people are taking an employment test than the number of positions available. Therefore, keep in mind that people who make the top test scores usually will be the first to be hired. Since test taking has a correct way, work on mastering test taking. Books can be obtained from the library and book stores to help you with this tedious task. Some test taking tips are as follows:

1. Review beforehand, i.e., study sample tests, talk with others who have taken the same test.

2. Arrive early with the "tools" needed such as two pencils, pen, calculator, and wrist watch.

3. Listen to and/or read directions carefully. Ask for any clarification before the test begins.

4. Budget the allotted test time by dividing it between sections.

5. No copying or talking during test.

6. Skip hard questions and return to them later.

7. Check over the completed test before handing it in.

   However, experts say that your first answer is more apt to be correct than your "second guess."

Proficiency tests may take several forms. The testing could be a series of examinations which will be computer scored; or the test may be an actual procedure such as one would encounter in the position applied for.

**Telephone Techniques**

Many times your initial response to a job lead is over the phone. Review your telephone manners to insure they are "working" for you and not against you. One of the common barriers to employment is a lack of good communication skills. If you are unable to express yourself clearly, the opportunity for an effective first impression may be lost.

**A Telephone Techniques Checklist**

Your initial telephone call should accomplish the following:

1. Identify yourself.
2. Explain the purpose of the call.
3. Express an interest in the position.
4. Mention your job-related training and past experience.
5. Request an appointment to fill out an application, or have an interview. (Your smile should be "heard" during the telephone conversation!)

In the event you are one who hesitates to make that initial phone call to set up an appointment because you don't know what to say, Activity 21 provides you with opportunity to practice.

## SAMPLE 7. INTERVIEW APPOINTMENT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

AFTER YOU DIAL THE PHONE NUMBER AND THE RECEPTIONIST HAS ANSWERED:

Hello, my name is Betty Alvarez

Who is the person in charge of hiring? "Ms. Nguyen."

Will you spell his/her last name, please? "NGUYEN."

May I speak to Ms. Nguyen, please?

AFTER THE CONNECTION HAS BEEN MADE:

Hello, Ms. Nguyen, my name is Betty Alvarez.

I have just completed a clerical course and my skills are typing, filing, 10-key & tel. sec.

I am interested in the general office position you have open. May I come in to fill out an application and give you my resume?

IF YOU RECEIVE A "YES" RESPONSE:

When would be a good time to come in? "Anytime today."

IF YOU RECEIVE "NO" RESPONSE:

May I call again in a couple of weeks to see if you have another opening? "Yes, please do."

BEFORE HANGING UP:

Thank you for your time and help.

## Activity 21
## DEVELOPING AN APPOINTMENT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

**PURPOSES**

1. To provide a sample of an interview appointment telephone conversation so that you can better understand this procedure.

2. To enable you to develop a sample interview appointment telephone conversation.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Read Sample 7 and answers provided.

2. Fill in the blanks in the form for you to use during your interview appointment telephone conversation.

AFTER YOU DIAL THE PHONE NUMBER AND THE RECEPTIONIST HAS ANSWERED:

Hello, my name is _____

Who is the person in charge of hiring? " _____ ."

Will you spell his/her last name, please? " _____ ."

May I speak to _____ , please?

AFTER THE CONNECTION HAS BEEN MADE:

Hello, _____ , my name is _____ .

I have just completed a _____ course and my skills are _____ .

I am interested in the _____ position you have open. May I come in to fill out an application and give you my resume?

IF YOU RECEIVE A "YES" RESPONSE:

When would be a good time to come in? " _____ ."

IF YOU RECEIVE "NO" RESPONSE:

May I call again in a couple of weeks to see if you have another opening? " _____ ."

BEFORE HANGING UP:

Thank you for your time and help.

3. Evaluate the answers you wrote.

**Telephone Screening Interview**

Businesses frequently conduct a telephone screening as part of the hiring process. Many times, it is part of your initial telephone call. Approximately five questions are frequently asked over the telephone by interviewers to start off the selection process. Have your resume handy as a reference when making telephone calls.

**Common Telephone Screening Questions and Sample Answers**

1. "Tell me about your skills."

   Be ready to read your skills as listed on your resume.

2. "Tell me about your previous work experience."

   Mention any employment experience you have had, even if they were self-owned businesses, as well as any vocational training courses you have taken which many companies may consider equivalent to work experience. When re-entering the world of work, it is a good idea to at least take a brush up course in job related skills so that you have a very recent date to mention.

3. "Why did you leave your last job?"

   Keep the response positive. Good answers are those such as desiring a career change, chances for advancement. To prove your sincerity regarding your desire for a career, mention the courses you have recently taken towards that end.

4. "What salary do you expect?"

   Keep your expectations realistic. The company already knows the salary range they plan to pay, but want to see if you are going to be happy with it.

5. "Would you be willing to take some proficiency tests to verify your skills?"

You will want to answer "yes" to this because proficiency tests are part of the hiring process in many cases.

## Activity 22
## YOUR ANSWERS TO COMMON TELEPHONE SCREENING QUESTIONS

**PURPOSE**

To help you compose power packed answers to common telephone screening questions so that you will be interviewed.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Write answers containing complete information.

   a. Tell me about your skills.

   b. Tell me about your previous work experience.

   c. Why did you leave your last job?

   d. What salary do you expect?

   e. Would you be willing to take some proficiency tests to verify your skills?

2. Evaluate the answers you wrote.

**Scheduling Interviews**

Scheduling interviews is integral to an effective job search. Calling a company to set up an appointment entails allocating a date and an adequate time slot. Allow enough time between appointments so as not to overlap. This involves allowing sufficient time for filling out an application, the interview itself, and/or proficiency testing; travel time between appointments; and arriving early for the appointment. In the event that unforeseen circumstances cause you to run late, make a phone call to explain to the receptionist at the next company that an unexpected delay has occurred. A company will usually be understanding in such a case, but unforgiving if you arrive late and haven't called beforehand to explain.

Another good telephone technique is to make a follow-up call a couple of days after the job interview. This call indicates your interest in the job and may influence the final selection in your favor.

Keep a record of all employer contacts. This enables you to readily retrieve necessary information when receiving telephone calls or written correspondence from employers already contacted. Nothing is worse than not remembering the details about an interview when you receive a job offer.

An *Employer Contact Sheet*, such as pictured in Sample 8, will provide an accurate record. Record every job search call. Include the date, name of the company, name of the person you spoke to, phone number, address, job title and job description. Record the appointment date and time, plus any additional pertinent remarks. Jot down any pending follow-up action such as a letter or call, and assign a date to accomplish this.

## SAMPLE 8. EMPLOYER CONTACT SHEET

| DATE | PHONE NUMBER | CONTACT PERSON<br>NAME OF COMPANY<br>ADDRESS OF COMPANY | JOB TITLE<br>JOB DESCRIPTION | COURSE OF ACTION | FOLLOW-UP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6-22 | 714/535-8616 | Mary Phelps<br>Best Co.<br>1000 N. Harbor<br>Fullerton | General office: phones, typing, filing, 10-key | fill out application 6-22<br>interview 6-23 | thank you letter 6-23 |
| 6-22 | 714/776-1841 | George Brown<br>Philips Inc.<br>1500 Bald Rd.<br>Anaheim | Receptionist: phones, filing | fill out application 6-24 | call 6-26 |
| 6-22 | 714/826-5421 | Mr. Gomez<br>Tufco Corp.<br>9406 Brookhurst<br>Garden Grove | File Clerk<br>filing, phones | fill out application 6-22 | call 6-26 |
| | | | | | |
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## Activity 23
## KEEPING RECORD OF EMPLOYER CONTACTS

**PURPOSES**

1. To review a sample form of how a record can be keep of contacts and follow-ups with employers.
2. To provide you with a form for keeping record.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Review Sample 8, Employer Contact Sheet.
2. Complete Your Employer Contact Sheet as you do the activities.

**YOUR EMPLOYER CONTACT SHEET**

| DATE | PHONE NUMBER | CONTACT PERSON<br>NAME OF COMPANY<br>ADDRESS OF COMPANY | JOB TITLE<br>JOB DESCRIPTION | COURSE OF ACTION | FOLLOW-UP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
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**Cover Letter Preparation**

The purpose of the cover letter is to help make a favorable initial impression on the employer especially when you are mailing a resume. It provides an opportunity to express your interest in the position as well as your qualifications. The cover letter is an example of good communication skills and it can increase your opportunities for finding the right employment.

A cover letter is composed of a few paragraphs identifying (1) your interest in the job for which you are applying, (2) your qualifications, and (3) a request for an interview. Each cover letter should be accompanied by a resume. Conversely, no resume should be mailed without a cover letter. If you personally hand the resume to the interviewer, or provide a copy of your resume to the person accepting your application, a cover letter does not accompany it.

A cover letter is your introduction to the employer and should be well written. It should be typed on 8½" x 11" bond paper using a standard business letter format. A good example of a well prepared cover letter is provided in Sample 9.

**Cover Letter Checklist**

1. Proper name and address of business. Name of a specific person, if available.
2. Identify position for which applying.
3. Interest in job for which applying.
4. Mention your qualifications.
5. Request an interview.
6. Use correct business style format for the letter: typed on 8½" x 11" bond paper, proper spacing and margins.
7. Your telephone number and return address included; a message phone number is a plus.
8. Enclose your resume.

## Activity 24
## STUDY OF COVER LETTER

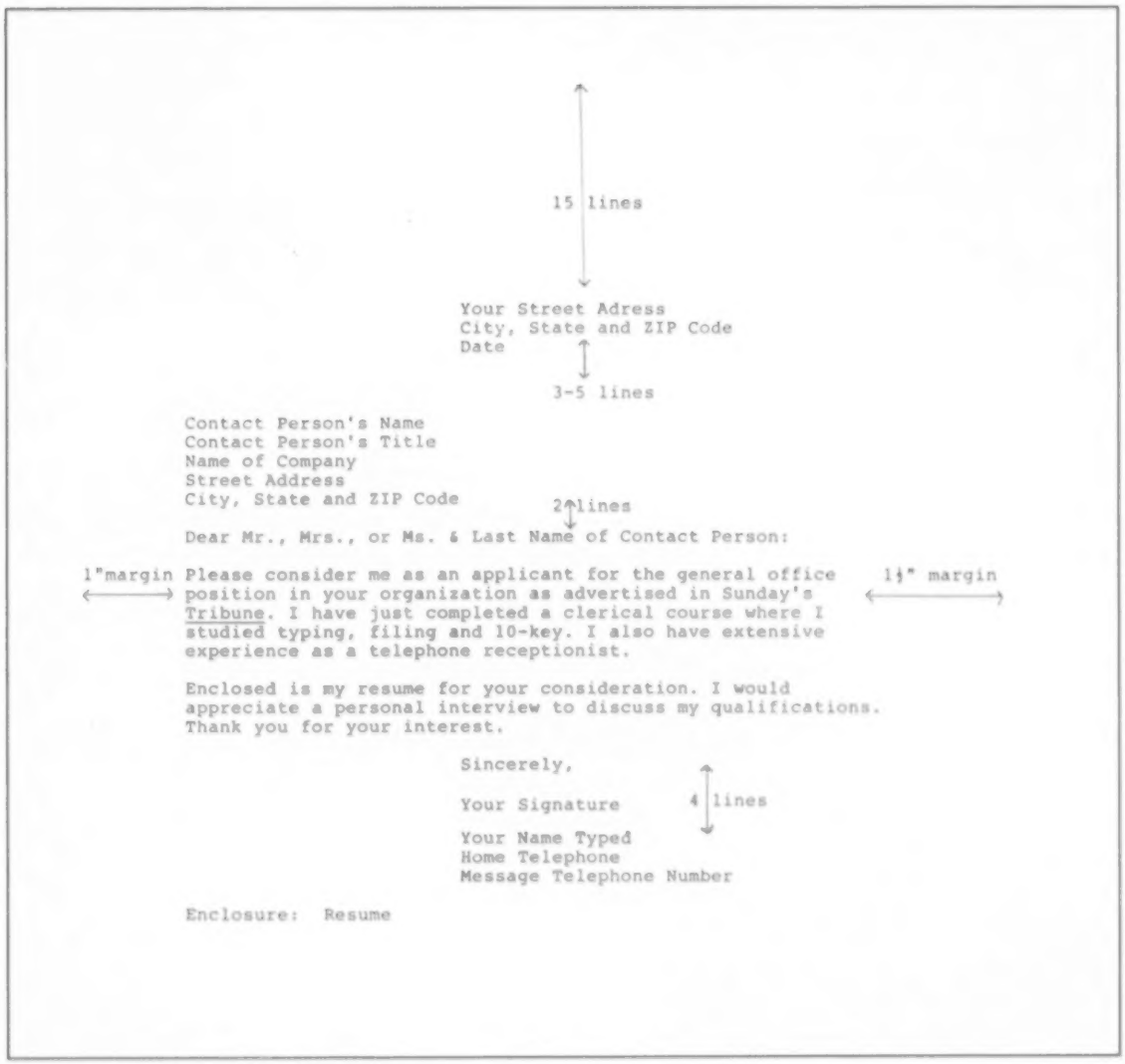
**PURPOSE**

To present a sample cover letter which follows an accepted business letter format.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Study the content of the sample letter.
2. Set up the typewriter with the suggested margins.

### SAMPLE 9. COVER LETTER


15 lines
Your Street Adress
City, State and ZIP Code
Date
3-5 lines
Contact Person's Name
Contact Person's Title
Name of Company
Street Address
City, State and ZIP Code
2 lines
Dear Mr., Mrs., or Ms. & Last Name of Contact Person:
1"margin
Please consider me as an applicant for the general office position in your organization as advertised in Sunday's Tribune. I have just completed a clerical course where I studied typing, filing and 10-key. I also have extensive experience as a telephone receptionist.
1½" margin
Enclosed is my resume for your consideration. I would appreciate a personal interview to discuss my qualifications. Thank you for your interest.
Sincerely,
Your Signature
4 lines
Your Name Typed
Home Telephone
Message Telephone Number
Enclosure: Resume

## Activity 25
## YOUR COVER LETTER

**PURPOSE**

To provide you with an exercise in composing a cover letter to fit your interests and background.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Compose your own cover letter in response to an ideal or an actual job opening.
2. Compare this letter with the check list presented in Activity 24.
3. Type your sample cover letter.

**Follow-Up Letters, Calls, Visits**

When deciding which applicant is best suited to the position available, a strong factor in the interviewer's selection will be the applicant's interest in the job. For that reason, emphasis must be placed on writing a well written follow-up thank you letter immediately after every interview. Besides, it is a sign of good manners to do so.

Therefore, immediately after every interview, mail a post interview letter. The letter should follow the style and format for a business letter and be typed on 8½" x 11" bond paper. Address the letter to the individual who interviewed you and include the interviewer's title. Try to remember to ask for a business card. In addition to supplying you with the correct information for the follow-up letter, the request for the card will demonstrate your interest in the position, the interviewer, and the company. The letter should express appreciation for the interview, mention any information or comments which you may have overlooked during the interview, and indicate again your interest in the position. Be sure to include your telephone number and a message number. Sample 10 is an illustration of a follow-up letter.

Two to three days after an interview, or on a date specified by the interviewer during the interview, make a return telephone call or a visit to determine if a decision has been made regarding the job opening.

## Activity 26
## STUDY OF A FOLLOW-UP LETTER

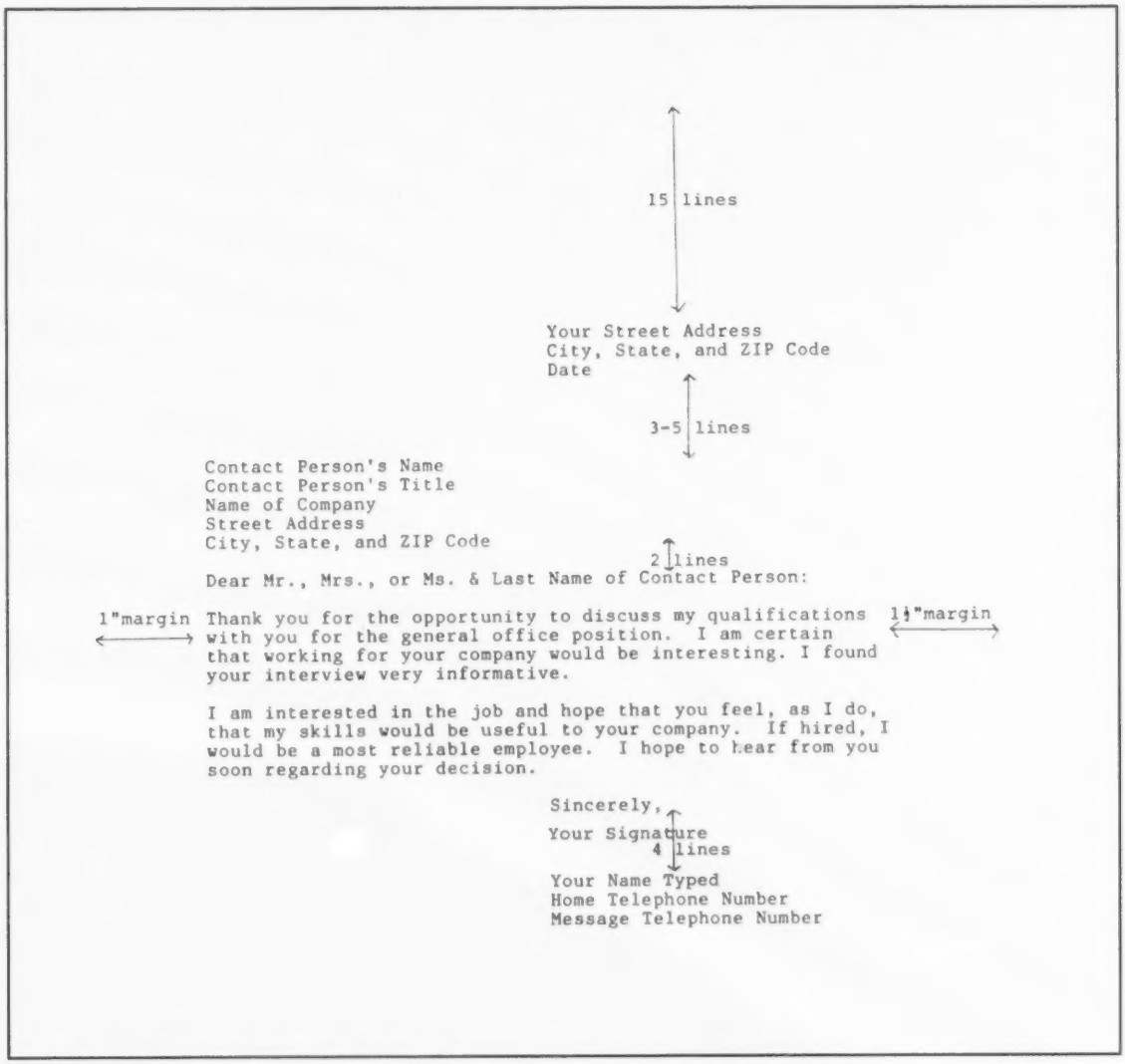
**PURPOSE**

To present a sample follow-up letter which follows an accepted business letter format.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Study the content of the Sample 10 Follow-up Letter.
2. Set up the typewriter with the suggested margins.

### SAMPLE 10. FOLLOW-UP LETTER


15 lines
Your Street Address
City, State, and ZIP Code
Date
3-5 lines
Contact Person's Name
Contact Person's Title
Name of Company
Street Address
City, State, and ZIP Code
2 lines
Dear Mr., Mrs., or Ms. & Last Name of Contact Person:
1"margin
1½"margin
Thank you for the opportunity to discuss my qualifications with you for the general office position. I am certain that working for your company would be interesting. I found your interview very informative.
I am interested in the job and hope that you feel, as I do, that my skills would be useful to your company. If hired, I would be a most reliable employee. I hope to hear from you soon regarding your decision.
Sincerely,
Your Signature
4 lines
Your Name Typed
Home Telephone Number
Message Telephone Number

## Activity 27
## YOUR FOLLOW-UP LETTER

**PURPOSE**

To provide you with an exercise in composing a follow-up letter to fit your particular situation following an interview.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Compose your own follow-up letter in response to an interview, real, or simulated.
2. Compare this letter with the information presented in Sample 10 Follow-up Letters in Activity 26.
3. Type your sample follow up letter.

CHAPTER 4

# "HOW TO'S" TO CONTINUE TO ADVANCE WITH YOUR FULL FUTURE

The prospect of many new tomorrows will continue to brighten your days during your full future.

Photograph courtesy of NASA.

EARTHRISE OVER MOON



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# "HOW TO'S" TO CONTINUE TO ADVANCE WITH YOUR FULL FUTURE

Moving ahead in your career requires motivation, energy, and continuing preparation. You may be superbly qualified for the job you now have, but the competition gets more intense the higher one climbs up the career ladder.

Do not let small things sabotage you and hold you back. On a daily basis, the firm handshake, warm smile, and good eye contact are just as important to advance in your career as they were during your very first interview. Make sure your hair style and clothes are up to date and selected to reinforce a positive halo effect.

**Job Retention and Career Advancement**

Many times the first job is a "bread and butter" job, a stepping stone towards your dream job. Sometimes you will find you will take that initial job, but continue to look for your dream job. To progress upwards from one job to another is easier than to wait passively for the offer of your dream job. Life is such that to sidestep the entry level rung of the career ladder is difficult.

Once you have found a career job, your challenge will be to hold it and to move ahead. You will find that to hold your job is easier if the tasks employed matches your interests and abilities; one for which you have the training and background. Remember, however, that even dream jobs have unpleasant tasks; nothing is perfect. At this point is when you will want to refer back to your long term goals (Activities 4 and 5) to see if you are on target. Make necessary revisions. Think about such things as whether you want to own your own business or work for someone else. Review the package of job skills you have, and determine if your career job demands additional education.

Many companies schedule periodic performance evaluations. The initial performance evaluation might be at the end of the probation period, followed thereafter by yearly evaluations. Also, when the time comes for a pay raise, when promotions are pending, or when dismissals are being considered, your work will be evaluated. Performance evaluation conferences offer an opportunity to identify your own achievements on the job, review your strengths and weaknesses, and plan ways to improve problem areas.

**Job Retention and Career Advancement Checklist**

Crucial areas for a positive evaluation are included in this checklist:

1. Punctuality is essential. Actually, go getters arrive 5 to 15 minutes early every day.

2. Absences only when absolutely necessary. Stay within time limits for coffee breaks and lunch periods.

3. Appropriate grooming. Experts advise dressing as the individual does who is on the next rung up the ladder.

4. Ability to accept criticism without resentment or gossip in retaliation.

5. Demonstrate consideration of others. Accept assignments without complaints, slowing down, or loafing.

6. Restrict personal phone calls and business matters during office hours to rare occasions.

7. Be cordial with co-workers. Offer to help someone else when you are not busy. Social conversations should take place only before or after working hours.

8. If you have doubt as to job responsibilities, consult with the supervisor. Take notes so the instructions don't need to be explained more than once or twice.

9. Doing your everyday assignments well and on time will help you advance.

10. Let your supervisors know when others are happy with your work.

11. Stay flexible, continue to improve yourself educationally, and be ready to adjust to changes in the business world.

Sample 11 is an illustration of a performance evaluation chart. Study it for an understanding of the many areas considered during a typical performance evaluation. Then complete Activity 28 in which you evaluate your performance in your present job or a job you listed in your resume.

## Activity 28
## EVALUATING YOUR PERFORMANCE

**PURPOSES**

1. To review a performance evaluation and gain a better concept of what is included.
2. To complete an evaluation of your performance.
3. To analyze the evaluation and decide what you want and can change.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Review Sample 11, Performance Evaluation.
2. Complete an evaluation of your performance by using Your Performance Evaluation Form.
3. Analyze your evaluation of your performance to reinforce the positiveness in your work and to identify those things on which you can work to improve.

### SAMPLE 11. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Employee Shirley Brown Date 6/7

Job Title General Office

**RATING SCALE**

**O** = OUTSTANDING: Performance is uniquely high, far beyond performance requirements.

AS = ABOVE SATISFACTORY: Performance is superior, beyond performance requirements.

G = GOOD: Results consistently meet and may occasionally exceed performance requirements.

S = SATISFACTORY: Results usually meet performance requirements.

M = MINIMAL: Frequently performs below performance requirements.

U = UNSATISFACTORY: Performance is too inadequate to retain in present job.

**RATING FACTORS**

| | | U | M | S | G | AS | O |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUALITY OF WORK | Accuracy, economy of materials and time, neatness | | | | | ✓ | |
| QUANTITY OF WORK | Productive output, speed, consistency of output | | | | ✓ | | |
| ATTENTION TO DUTY | Follow instructions, good judgment | | | | ✓ | | |
| DEPENDABILITY | Punctuality and attendance, good safety habits | | | | | | ✓ |
| ATTITUDE | Cooperates with co-workers, accepts criticism | | | | ✓ | | |
| JOB KNOWLEDGE | Possesses basic knowledge of job duties and skills | | | ✓ | | | |
| JUDGMENT | Ability to arrive at decisions | | | | | ✓ | |

DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Specific action suggested to help the employee improve performance; cite help/training needed by employee.

Would benefit from data entry instructions.

NEXT YEAR'S GOALS: Employee should establish goals to include new and better ways to carry out job responsibilities, as well as plans for personal development. These goals will be included in the next performance evaluation.

Enrollment in evening classes in data entry (company reimburses tuition if employee receives a passing grade).

EMPLOYEE REMARKS: Employee is encouraged to add comments to this review. If additional space is needed, attach a separate sheet.

I am signing this performance evaluation to indicate that my manager and I have discussed the above comments.

Employee _____ Date _____

Manager Bill Cox 6-7

1 copy kept in employee's file
1 copy given to employee

## YOUR PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

Employee _____ Date _____

Job Title _____

### RATING SCALE

O = OUTSTANDING: Performance is uniquely high, far beyond performance requirements.

AS = ABOVE SATISFACTORY: Performance is superior, beyond performance requirements.

G = GOOD: Results consistently meet and may occasionally exceed performance requirements.

S = SATISFACTORY: Results usually meet performance requirements.

M = MINIMAL: Frequently performs below performance requirements.

U = UNSATISFACTORY: Performance is too inadequate to retain in present job.

### RATING FACTORS

| | | U | M | S | G | AS | O |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| QUALITY OF WORK | Accuracy, economy of materials and time, neatness | | | | | | |
| QUANTITY OF WORK | Productive output, speed, consistency of output | | | | | | |
| ATTENTION TO DUTY | Follow instructions, good judgment | | | | | | |
| DEPENDABILITY | Punctuality and attendance, good safety habits | | | | | | |
| ATTITUDE | Cooperates with co-workers, accepts criticism | | | | | | |
| JOB KNOWLEDGE | Possesses basic knowledge of job duties and skills | | | | | | |
| JUDGMENT | Ability to arrive at decisions | | | | | | |

DEVELOPMENT PLAN: Specific action suggested to help the employee improve performance; cite help/training needed by employee.

NEXT YEAR'S GOALS: Employee should establish goals to include new and better ways to carry out job responsibilities, as well as plans for personal development. These goals will be included in the next performance evaluation.

EMPLOYEE REMARKS: Employee is encouraged to add comments to this review. If additional space is needed, attach a separate sheet.

I am signing this performance evaluation to indicate that my manager and I have discussed the above comments.

Employee _____ Date _____

Manager _____ _____

1 copy kept in employee's file
1 copy given to employee

## Activity 29
## IDEAS FOR PROBLEM SOLVING

**PURPOSE**

To help you discover practical ways to address a problem and find workable answers.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Consider a problem you have right now.
2. Try the following IDEAS to arrive at a viable solution.

   **I** ***IDENTIFY*** the problem.

   **D** Gather the ***DATA*** regarding the problem.

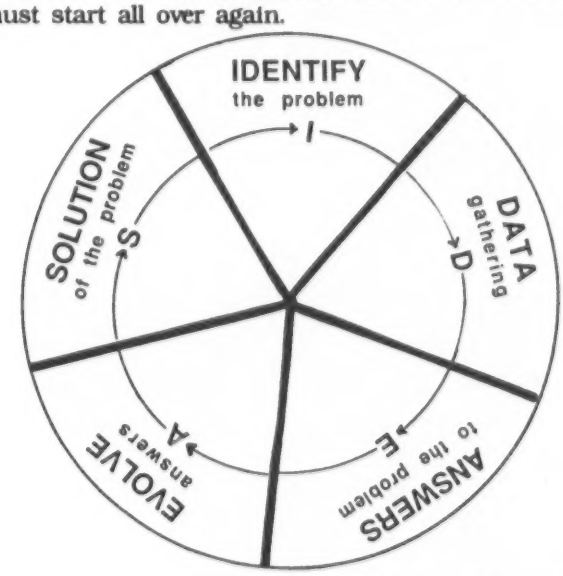
   **E** Try to develop and ***EVOLVE*** creative ways to address the problem.

   **A** Find ***ANSWERS.***

   **A** Act on the best ***ANSWER.***

   **S** ***SOLUTION*** of the problem and/or evaluation of the results.

3. Consult experts, or people who have successfully dealt with similar problems, for possible answers. Sometimes the best idea is quite different from the original idea.
4. Note that the answer section has two parts. Deciding on an answer requires you to consider possible results of each one. Then you must decide on how to carry out the selected answer in order to achieve the solution of the problem.
5. Resolve the problem, or, as in some cases, an evaluation of the situation will indicate that the IDEAS process must start all over again.



## Activity 30
## PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITIES

**PURPOSE**

To rate your problem solving abilities in the True and False section, and help you improve your problem solving abilities in the Follow-Up Section.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Circle either T (true) or F (false) for each of the following statements.

   a. When solving a problem, try the first idea that comes to mind. T F

   b. Problem solving abilities are abilities with which you are born. T F

   c. Each problem has only one good answer. T F

   d. Problem solving is a trial and error process. T F

   e. Once an answer to a problem is selected, the problem can be considered solved. T F

   f. A good technique in problem solving is to put it in the form of a question. T F

   g. If a person stops concentrating on a problem for awhile, the mind keeps working on it. T F

   h. With difficult problems to solve, consult other people for ideas. T F

   i. Not identifying the problem up front makes problem solving more difficult. T F

   j. When problem solving, the results of the selected answer are often unexpected. T F

   k. When problem solving, try to gather as much data as possible before trying to solve it. T F

   l. The best procedure is to try to solve a problem as quickly as possible. T F

   m. When problem solving, try to think of several answers to the problem before choosing one. T F

2. Continue to the Follow-Up Section, Activity 31.

## Activity 31
## PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITIES
## FOLLOW-UP SECTION

**PURPOSE**

To help you improve your problem-solving abilities.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Review the correct answers provided below, one at a time.
2. Change the initial statements on the previous page (Activity 30) which were false, to make them true statements.
3. Disagree with any of the answers provided, but write a statement supporting your difference of opinion.

a. False because when solving a problem, it's best to consider as many answers as possible, perhaps write a list of possible good answers, before you select one.

b. False because problem solving abilities can be developed by study and practice. Just as exercise helps muscle power, practice helps problem solving abilities.

c. False because many problems have many good answers. However, some problems have many bad answers as well.

d. False because by following proper problem solving techniques, a person can avoid painful errors.

e. False because effective problem solving techniques teach us that evaluation of results is an important step.

f. True because by putting your problem in question form you will see the problem more clearly and help you select the proper answer.

g. True because a person's mind can work on a solution to a problem while doing an unrelated task or even while sleeping! You do better not dwelling on the problem. Some people find that writing the problem, then leaving it for a time, allows new answers to surface.

h. True because other's experience may be of value in solving your problem.

i. True because insufficient data and poor understanding of the problem are common barriers to solving problems.

j. True because efficient problem solving includes fresh data and viewpoints which often lead to fresh, unexpected answers.

k. True because data gathering is an integral part of effective problem solving techniques.

l. False because time is required to properly gather data, investigate answers, and formulate a plan.

m. True because new approaches may offer new answers, or a new combination of answers to the problem.

CHAPTER 5

# UPS AND DOWNS OF MOVING AHEAD

Have the Courage to put new ideas into practice.

Photograph courtesy of NASA.

VIKING EXPLORES MARS
LIFTOFF

# UPS AND DOWNS OF MOVING AHEAD

Career advancement requires you to be on top of things. Additional skills may be necessary. High technology is here, update your skills periodically.

For most people, the majority of the time spent working on a job is spent interacting with other people. Cultivating good interpersonal relations with other employees is crucial. Improving public speaking skills will stand you in good stead for those occasions when you will be called upon to present a report, or make an announcement at meetings. Therefore, an invaluable procedure is to continue to network, meet new people, and share career goals and ideas.

Maintaining a positive attitude is part of the successful person's image. This positive attitude is easier when you have improved across the board in personal and professional development, and indeed have many things about which to be positive. Do not forget to "blow your own trumpet" and let others know about your new areas of expertise, and when another group is pleased with your work. Of course you can't brag constantly, but keep your bosses informed regarding your progress.

Setting short term goals, easy to reach and succeed in, is an appropriate first step, and supplies you with necessary "strokes." Setting long term goals will help maintain your drive and momentum.

However, keeping a positive attitude, and a strong drive toward fulfilling your goals, does not mean that you won't have failures. Sometimes a failure may be the price of progress. If you never try anything new, how will you improve and get results. To try and fail truly is better than not to try at all. People who maintain a status quo (also known as "being in a rut") certainly won't fail at anything new, but neither will they advance. To move ahead toward your full future, you will have to have the courage to put new ideas into practice, to run the risk of failures.

For example, during your job search you may have to apply at many businesses, over an extended period of time, before you land that first job. Please don't view such an event as a catastrophe...keep persevering. Indeed, periodically, perhaps on a weekly basis, you may want to review your resume, your interviewing techniques, and job search skills. Based on the review you may identify things you need to do to improve your job securing skills, for example, changes in your resume, changes in your portfolio, practice interviewing skills, or take additional training. Seek additional coaching in weak areas, but interpret the interviews you have had that didn't result in job offers as positive learning experiences which will help you in the long run. When you finally get that job and start your career, you will experience an excitement hard to describe!

## Activity 32
## COMBINING PERSONAL AND CAREER TRAITS/GOALS

**PURPOSE**

To assist you in combining your personal and career traits/goals.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Select the descriptive word(s) which most closely describes your feelings in response to the questions regarding your personal traits/goals by checking one of the numbers of 1 through 5.

2. Identify responses as follows: 5-Definitely; 4-Most Likely; 3-Perhaps; 2-Not Likely; 1-Definitely Not.

| PERSONAL TRAITS/GOALS | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Am I able to be a leader, depending on the situation? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do I plan things thoroughly? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Am I able to adjust to new situations without giving up good aspects of the old? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do I have balance between compassion and control? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Can I accept rules and goals of others and still use initiative for my goals? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do I use my time and energy to get my work finished, and still have time and energy left for my family and outside interests? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Am I able to act independently, yet know when to ask for advice? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do I try to look at things in a positive yet realistic light? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

3. List your strongest personal trait/goal.

My strongest personal trait/goal is _____

4. List your personal trait/goal most in need of help.

My personal trait/goal most in need of help is _____

## Activity 33
## COMBINING PERSONAL AND CAREER TRAITS/GOALS
## Continued

**PURPOSE**

To assist you in combining your personal and career traits/goals.

**DIRECTIONS**

1. Select the descriptive word which most closely describes your feelings in response to the questions regarding your career traits/goals by checking one of the numbers of 1 through 5.

2. Identify responses as follows: 5-Definitely; 4-Most Likely; 3-Perhaps; 2-Not Likely; 1-Definitely Not.

| CAREER TRAITS/GOALS | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Do I have competencies which will be useful both now and in years to come? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Will my career goals allow a balance between my career, family and outside interests? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Are my career goals in line with my abilities? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do my career goals interact well with my personal goals? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Will I be able to advance in my career? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |
| Do I know how to anticipate changes on the job such as layoffs, and prepare for them? | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ | ___ |

3. List your strongest career trait/goal.

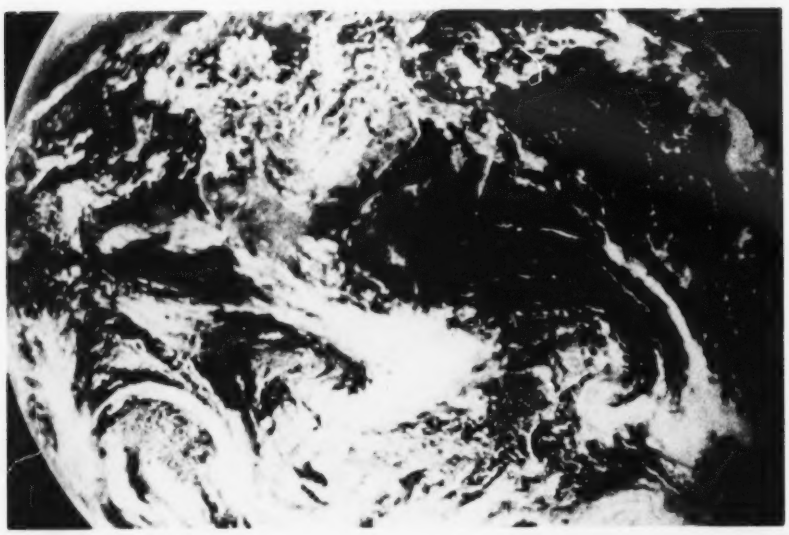
My strongest career trait/goal is _____

4. List your career trait/goal most in need of help.

My career trait/goal most in need of help is _____

CHAPTER 6

# VIEWPOINTS



See your future with a new perspective.

Photograph courtesy of NASA.

ANTARCTICA, AFRICAN CONTINENT, EAST COAST MADAGASCAR



112
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# VIEWPOINTS

A strong relation seems to exist between nature, technology, human development, and personal development. The photographs from outer space used in this book were selected to illustrate this point. Seeing these space shots reinforce the idea that your full future is limitless.

Just as nature appears to evolve from simple to complex, you can expand your personal and professional goals from short (simple) to long term (complex) achievements. Just as the universe appears to evolve in an ascending spiral expanding all dimensions including space and time, you can evolve and expand your potential. Just as these views of space, taken from a new perspective provide us with an awakening which will direct our attention upward, you can see your future with new perspective.

You are actually an integral part of the total universe. This is akin to what Timothy Ferris (1984), author of scientific material, meant when he said "Every electron in the synapses of every human . . . thought, every atom of our blood and bones, every here was there." Nothing disappears, it is simply re-formed. Be an active part of the continuum which draws every being and molecule into a "superunified interaction" with all forces and dimensions of matter and spirit circling upward together.

Ego-centered as humans are, we like to believe that we are at the pinnacle of evolutionary development. Not only is this notion inaccurate and probably incorrect, we must profoundly examine questions central to the experience of being human. And, being human, we are not born perfect. We have to continually strive to improve. The space mission photographs can serve to further demonstrate to us what motivation can accomplish. As the philosopher and scientist Theilhard de Chardin (1971) said ". . . without the taste for life, mankind would soon stop inventing and constructing . . ." In a similar vein, Ferris wrote that "Insofar as the universe is harmonious, our thoughts and perceptions resonate with its harmonies; and insofar as the universe is struggling to complete itself, so are we." He continued by saying ". . . but generally speaking, a conviction that there is beauty in nature would seem to enhance one's chances for a happy and productive life."

Indeed, we have gone "full circle." We started with suggestions on ways to develop a positive attitude and a career. We presented techniques to get that first "post empty nest" job. We have reviewed ways to advance in your career.

Now we are closing with thoughts of how you can fit into the total picture of things. The practical application of the ideas in this book is your next step. Everything presented has been dedicated to, and designed for, the woman who wants to react to the empty nest syndrome with a positive attitude, a career, and a full future. Set your goals. Translate them into action. Best of luck with your full future after the empty nest!

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia P. Coad



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Cynthia Coad, OTR, Ed.D., (& *PHT) is coordinator of the Manpower Education and Training Program at Cypress College campus, Orange County, California. As coordinator, she works closely with business to ascertain their personnel needs, and also supervises the job placement phase of adult students. This work, along with her experience working with special needs populations, has led to publications in professional journals, conference presentations and television appearances in the United States, Canada, Israel, Denmark, Australia, Puerto Rico, Finland, the Orient, the Mediterranean, and Germany. She and her husband, Thomas Coad, D.D.S., have co-authored a recent publication entitled "How to Hire and Fire the Right People...Legally."

In addition, as a mother of seven children, Dr. Cynthia Coad has experienced the busy life of a mother, followed by the empty nest syndrome. In fact, Dr. Coad, in her role as a wife, was earning her *PHT degree (Putting Hubby Through Degree) by working to support the family and put her husband through dental school in the years the first three children arrived on the scene. Then, later, she received her Doctor of Education degree from Nova University at a time of her life when the nest was starting to empty. She knows from first hand experience the multiple roles a woman of today manages, and the emotions a re-entry woman feels.

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